

# *Vintage* ROADSCENE

www.roadscene.com

Issue 183 February 2015 £4.10

## Extra:

### Newspaper Delivery Vans

## Read all about it!



Early Snorkels



Pickfords Atkinsons



Bus Breakdowns

■ Number Plates ■ Commer and Dodge ■ Beautiful Bodies  
■ 80s Memories ■ Bus Driver of the Year ■ DFDS in Grimsby





# Truckfix



Clutches, flywheels,  
cranes, PSV, truck,  
plant, drive plate  
re-corking, friction  
material, dry and oil  
immersed friction  
specialists, custom  
clutch service and  
Technical advice



Cumbria Classic Coaches 1951 Guy Arab was originally with Lancashire United (LUT) of Manchester. This stunning coach with a Roe body, runs in the fleet of preserved vehicles and has been as far as Norway with us, although more regularly operates around the North of England and Southern Scotland. The Guy is still a full commercially operated vehicle. After clocking up so many miles, the brake linings needed totally replacing. With bookings for the bus to be taken into consideration, timings were somewhat restricted – this is where 'Truckfix' came to our rescue. With a turn round of one week, Truckfix delivered new linings and rivets for our mechanic to fit onto our bus.

Now affectionately known as "Lawrence" - further details of our LUT can be found on the website 'CumbriaClassicCoaches.co.uk' and also on 'Facebook' or why not come along for a ride!



[www.narcolepsy.org.uk](http://www.narcolepsy.org.uk)



Holders of major Bus, Coach, Crane and Truck fleet contracts

**TEL: 01274 877322 FAX: 08448 584481**

**EMAIL: [sales@truckfixclutches.com](mailto:sales@truckfixclutches.com) [www.truckfixclutches.com](http://www.truckfixclutches.com)**

Truckfix Limited. Highfield Works,  
Bradford Road, Cleckheaton, BD19 3TN



search  
'truckfix  
clutches'





### VINTAGE ROADSCENE

www.roadscene.com

#### KELSEY MEDIA

Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill,  
Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG  
Telephone: +44 (0)1959 541444  
Fax: +44 (0)1959 541400

#### Editorial

**Editor:** Mike Forbes – 01959 541444  
**Email:** vr.ed@kelsey.co.uk  
**Art Editor:** Rob Terry – rob@focusedondesign.co.uk

#### ADVERTISEMENT SALES

##### Talk Media Sales

01732 445325

vr.ads@kelsey.co.uk

##### Deputy Production Manager:

Charlotte Whittaker 01733 353367

charlotte.whittaker@kelsey.co.uk

##### Production Manager:

Karen Wayman

karen.wayman@kelsey.co.uk

#### MANAGEMENT

**Managing Director:** Phil Weeden

**Chief Executive:** Steve Wright

**Chairman:** Steve Annetts

**Finance Director:** Joyce Parker-Sarioglu

##### Creative Directors:

Vicky Ophield & Emma Dublin

**Retail Distribution Manager:** Eleanor Brown

**Audience Development Manager:**

Andy Cotton

**Subs Marketing Manager:** Dan Webb

**Brand Marketing Manager:** Rebecca Gibson

**Events Manager:** Kat Chappell

**Events Marketing Manager:** Sarah Jackson

#### CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

##### Subscriptions

**UK Subscriptions Order Line:**

0845 241 5159

**UK Subscriptions Enquiry Line:**

01959 543 747

**UK Postal Freepost Address:**

Vintage Roadscene Magazine, Kelsey Publishing Ltd,  
Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent,  
TN16 3AG

**Overseas Order and Enquiry Line:**

(0) 1959 543 747

**Overseas Postal Address:** Vintage Roadscene  
Magazine, Kelsey Publishing Ltd, Cudham Tithe Barn,  
Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent, TN16 3AG,  
United Kingdom.

**Email Address:** subs@kelsey.co.uk

ISSN 0266-8947

#### Subscriptions (Annual 12 issues rates)

**UK:** £49.20

**Europe/USA/Canada:** £63.49

**ROW:** £69.75

**Kelsey Shop** www.kelseyshop.co.uk

**Back issues:** 0845 873 9270

**Books:** 0845 450 4920

#### DISTRIBUTION

Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue,  
London, EC1A 9PT www.seymour.co.uk  
Tel: 020 7429 4000

#### PRINTING

PCP Ltd, Telford, Shropshire. Tel 01952 585585

Kelsey Media 2015 © all rights reserved. Kelsey Media is a trading name of Kelsey Publishing Ltd. Reproduction in whole or in part is forbidden except with permission in writing from the publishers. Note to contributors: articles submitted for consideration by the editor must be the original work of the author and not previously published. Where photographs are included, which are not the property of the contributor, permission to reproduce them must have been obtained from the owner of the copyright. The editor cannot guarantee a personal response to all letters and emails received. The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Publisher. Kelsey Publishing Ltd accepts no liability for products and services offered by third parties.

Kelsey Publishing Ltd uses a multi-layered privacy notice, giving you brief details about how we would like to use your personal information. For full details, visit www.kelsey.co.uk, or call 01959 543524.

If you have any questions, please ask as submitting your details indicates your consent, until you choose otherwise, that we and our partners may contact you about products and services that will be of relevance to you via direct mail, phone, email or SMS. You can opt out at ANY time via email: data.controller@kelsey.co.uk or 01959 543524.

Vintage Roadscene is available for licensing worldwide. For more information, contact bruce@bruceandfordlicensing.com



www.kelsey.co.uk

Vintage Roadscene is published on the third Friday of each month preceding the cover date.

### 6 Identity Crisis

**Colin Chesterman** brings us pictures of some Commers as the name was giving way to Dodge.

### 10 Simon Snorkels

**Ron Henderson** recalls that the latest idea for fire appliances in the 1960s took a while to catch on.

### 14 Number Plates for Tea

**Mike Gosling** shares a fascinating picture card album featuring registration numbers.

### 17 Bus company Breakdown Trucks

**Phil Moth** brings us an interesting selection of vehicles used to recover broken down buses in the past.

### 22 80s Mix

**Mike Forbes** shares some memories of visits to transport operators in the 1980s.

### 26 The Bull-nosed Atkinson

**Norman Chapman** remembers some special vehicles built at Pickfords' request.

### 32 Scenes Past - Read all about it - again

**Mike Forbes** offers another selection of Stilltime Collection pictures, showing newspaper delivery vehicles of the past.

### 40 DFDS in Grimsby

**Ray Newcomb** has unearthed yet more archive material on the company's history.

### 48 Blackpool Day Out - Yes Please!

**Bill Berry** relates his experiences at the Bus Driver of the Year competition.

### 52 If I said you had a beautiful body - 2

**Malcolm Bates** brings us more classic bodywork - always a bit of an after-thought, wasn't it?

### 58 Rally Round-up

**Mike Forbes** and **Jim King** complete our review of the many rallies visited during 2014, with the season-closing events.

### 66 Review Scene

We comment on some publications and models of interest to Roadscene readers.

### 69 Scene & Heard

Your letters with comments on recent articles and more...

### 74 Tailscene - A Day at the Seaside

Pictures which relate back to previous articles, from the British Coach Rally in 1956.

**SUBSCRIBE TO VINTAGE ROADSCENE  
SEE PAGE 46 FOR OUR LATEST OFFERS**



# CASH TODAY

**Money for your secondhand  
locos & rolling stock**

**Tel : 0151 733 3655**  
**Email : [preowned@ehattons.com](mailto:preowned@ehattons.com)**

Phone opening times  
Mon to Thu **7am-9pm** Fri & Sat **8am-6pm** Sun **9am-5pm**

Shop opening times  
Mon to Sat **8am-6pm** Sun **10am-4pm**

"Thanks for the prompt service.  
I'm amazed that you sent a  
valuation less than a day after  
my original enquiry!"

*Mr K Stevens, Hull*

"I was very pleased with the  
price offered by Hatton's and the  
simplicity of the service - I hope  
you find happy new owners for my  
locomotives"

*Mr R Thompson, Surrey*

## Step 1

**Contact us** with your list of items

Email your list of items to:  
**[preowned@ehattons.com](mailto:preowned@ehattons.com)**

Post your list to:  
**364-368 Smithdown Road, Liverpool, L15 5AN**

Phone us with your list on:  
**0151 733 3655**



## Step 2

Our experienced staff **Review** your list

A **Valuation** is made of your items

We make you an **Offer**

(usually within 24 hours)



All items listed online at

**[www.ehattons.com/  
latestpreowned](http://www.ehattons.com/latestpreowned)**



**Hundreds of new items  
added every day**

**All brands purchased:**

(including)



## Step 3

Either **Send** us your items

Or we arrange to **Collect**



## Step 4

Once we receive the items we'll **Check**

them and **Confirm** the offer



## Step 5



We make **Payment**

Fast and secure with your choice of either

**Cash - Bank Transfer - PayPal - Cheque**

"I've bought from Hatton's  
for years and the trade-in  
service is just as efficient  
and friendly as usual - great  
service!"

*Mr H Moorhouse, Lincoln*





always enjoy looking at the pictures in the Stilltime Collection and others as, apart from the vehicles, there is always plenty to see. Whether it is a street scene, a factory yard, the docks or the countryside, there will always be something of interest in the background. Sometimes this can be more significant than the lorry, bus or van which was being photographed.

Perhaps the most exciting thing is to look at an old picture and realise that you know the location. An example was the picture of the A1 in Stamford which was our Tailscene about a year ago. In some respects, the scene has not changed much, apart from the vehicles to be seen, of course.

Sometimes the pictures require a little detective work. It can be a bit easier with buses, as the routes and destinations can offer clues. Reference to books or other magazines, especially older issues can also point the way.

Last year, I put together the first 'Vintage Bus & Coach' album in the Key Roadscene Collection, and included a series of pictures of Midland Red vehicles in various locations around the company's operating area. I made the usual comments on the vehicles, services and locations.

Imagine my surprise and happiness when, having come across the May 27, 1960 issue of Commercial Motor among some other old magazines, I found the article shown below. It was the first of three, looking at the work of Midland Red from various points of view, operations, maintenance and research and development for new types of buses, which the company was still building for itself at the time.

I was particularly pleased that my detective

work on the locations shown in the pictures had come up trumps, and my captions in the book were more or less correct.

The same holds true for the 'Scenes Past' and other articles in this magazine. I and the other contributors often spend a lot of time researching the background to the pictures we use, as we feel it adds a lot to the overall nostalgic feel we are trying to impart in Vintage Roadscene. It's the same with the stories themselves; those little details all make up the background against which the main features are set.

Of course, we don't always get everything right, and readers are quick to point out the correct details or, when our knowledge or research runs out, somebody will write in, adding more background information, often from personal knowledge, or from family or friends. It all goes to make up a feast of nostalgia, with memories of the way things used to be. Not always better, maybe, but that's what it's all about.

Also seen here is the cover of the first of a new series of publications, which will be called 'Road Haulage Archive', which will be available soon. This one looks at Seddons, something of a forgotten make, but more popular in its day than some people remember, as always, with lots of period pictures of the vehicles on test and at work, with different bodies to suit. Other titles on operators and other makes are planned to follow. Look out for the adverts in future issues of Kelsey magazines and find the new publication in branches of W H Smith from next month.

In this issue, we return to a subject which brought a lot of interest a few months ago,

newspaper delivery vans. We also have articles on a wide range of other subjects with, I hope, something to suit everybody – and plenty of archive pictures, which is what readers all say they like to see.

Next month, with reports that they are about to knock down the Earls Court exhibition centre, where so many of our archive pictures were taken over the years, we are planning a major feature, looking back to the great days of commercial vehicle shows held there. Don't miss it... *Mike Forbes, Editor*

## ON THE COVER...



The Lancashire Evening Post is still going today, but in the 1950s had a somewhat mixed fleet of delivery vans, photographed during a Commercial Motor visit, including this Morris 1/2 ton van, DRN 154 (Preston, 1950), seen parked outside the Guardian Office, in Fishergate, in the centre of Preston, ignoring the 'No Waiting' sign.

We published pictures of newspaper vans in the March 2014 issue, which prompted a number of letters from readers with a desire for more, so here they are. This time, there is less of an emphasis on paper vans in the capital. We have some specially coachbuilt bodywork, as well as lightly modified and standard examples of light vans, plus a few open lorries, which might come as a surprise.

◀ This article appeared in the May 27, 1960 issue of Commercial Motor, using pictures we reproduced in the Vintage Bus & Coach album in the Key Roadscene Collection. We are pleased to say that we got most of the details correct about the locations shown. There will be a second Vintage Bus & Coach published soon...

▶ Look out for the first of a new series of publications next month...



**ROAD HAULAGE ARCHIVE**

# Seddon

OLDHAMS FINEST SINCE 1938

**ARCHIVE PICTURES DOCUMENTING OVER 75 YEARS OF SEDDON LORRIES**

**Vintage ROADSCENE**



# IDENTITY CRISIS

**Colin Chesterman** brings us another selection of pictures from his archives, from the time when the Commer name was being replaced with Dodge.



**C**hrysler was busy re-naming all its Commer commercials as Dodge, during the latter part of the 1970s. This meant that the dear old (in some peoples' eyes) Commer PB would become known as the Dodge Spacevan, giving it a few more year's life in the market; the Walk-Thru just got a Dodge badge for its last few years; while the recently-introduced Commer Commando would become known as the Dodge Hi-Line. This lived on to become a Renault in the 1980s, but that's another story...

Meanwhile, Castles Motor Company – still in business as a Peugeot dealership – had taken over the long-established EW Campion in



**Above:** The Commer 15 cwt personnel carrier could be fitted with a petrol engine or a Perkins 4-99 diesel, although later models had the Perkins 4-108 fitted. This mini-bus, PBC 476R (Leicester, August 1976) for a local Leicester company, a 'Leader in Plastic Finishing'; according to some of the extra signwriting set out in the 'biro' additions to the picture.

**Above:** Another late Commer 15 cwt, this time a van, which is fitted with sliding cab doors, contrasting with the hinged doors on the mini-bus. Registered PNR 557R (Leicester, September 1976) this was for Pyke Butchers (Midlands) Ltd of Leicester.





**Above:** This Commer G 7575 was one of the last of the Commando series. A 7.5 tonnes gross tipper, PJU 216R (Leicester, August 1976), was supplied to a local building contractor, Hedley V Batchelor Ltd.



**Above:** A heavier Commer Commando G1585 – before the Hi-Line badge was added – pictured before registration, but at around the same time as the lighter tipper.



**Left:** The 2 ton chassis-cab version of the Commer 'Walk-Thru' van, with its 'jack-knife' cab doors, was popular as a delivery vehicle. This one, KNR 597P (Leicester, August 1975) was bodied for a local company. Belgrave Laundry merged with Wigston Laundry, which had previously used Morris-Commercial vans.

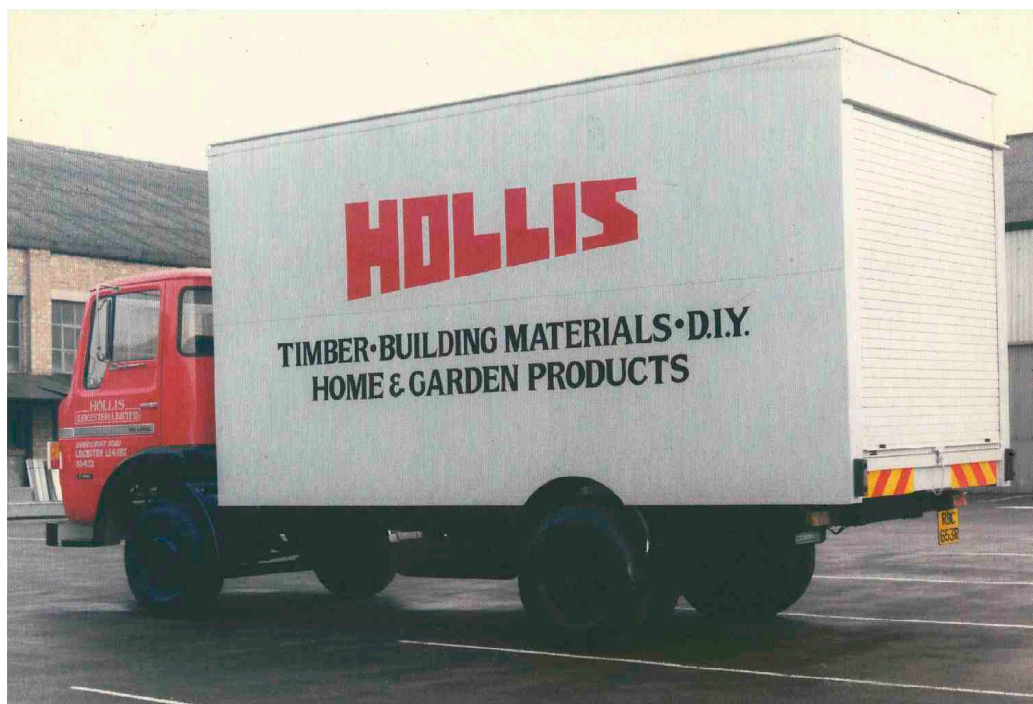
**Below:** The Commer badge can just be seen under the nearside rear light cluster of this 7.5 tonnes G7590 'Hi-Line' box van, RBC 653R (Leicester, November 1976), for Hollis (Leicester) Ltd, what would probably once have been known as an ironmongers, with another base in Hull.

1962-63 and carried on supplying Commers, Karriers and later Dodges to operators in the Leicester area, which were still bodied by the company at the same bodyshop in Northgate, Leicester.

E W Campion had been a Commer, Karrier, Humber, Hillman and Sunbeam agent, based in Braunstone Gate in Leicester, with a body shop in the nearby 'Frog Island' area of the city, between the River Soar and the Soar Navigation, a continuation of the Grand Union Canal, with the Woodgate area to the north and Northgate to the south.

The demise of the Campion company followed the fading out of the Rootes Group. This had been just one of as many as a dozen bodybuilders which flourished in the Leicester area between the 1940s and 1980s.

Here we have a selection of vehicles supplied and bodied by the company in the late 1970s, as the Commer name gave way to Dodge.







**Above:** This time with the Hi-line badge added, a Commer G1390 with a classic-style body, with a sloping nearside for a local glass merchant, again before registration.

**Left:** After the Dodge badge replaced Commer, this 7.5 ton long wheelbase platform lorry, WBC 156S (Leicester, January 1978) was supplied to Spurway-Matthews waste merchants.

**Below:** Another Dodge 7.5 tonner, which would be fitted with a Perkins engine, this dropside, UNR 774S (Leicester, August 1977) was in the colours of British Steam Specialities.







**Left:** Another box van body, on a Dodge Hi-Line badged 7.5 tonnes gross chassis, WFP 778S (Leicester, January 1978) was built for local toy wholesaler, W J Brown.

**Below:** The newest vehicle in this selection, another long-wheelbase 16 tonner, with dropside body, AJF 96T (Leicester, August 1978), was for Wyvern Steel Tubes, based in London and Leicester. Note the mudflaps lettered for the bodybuilders – now largely a thing of the past.



**Above:** This Dodge Hi-Line 16-tonner, WAY 724S (Leicester, January 1978) was fitted with an interesting special curtain-sided body, but the customer's name cannot be made out.



**Above:** A Dodge 16-tonner, with the Perkins 6-354 diesel engine, VUT 896S (Leicester, December 1977), for an Oadby-based steel stockholder, fitted with a platform body with very shallow dropsides.



# SIMON SNORKELS



*Ron Henderson looks at a very useful piece of equipment for fire-fighters.*

**T**he versatile hydraulic platform or 'Snorkel' as a working platform has been in use by maintenance contractors since the early 1950s, but it was not until the mid-1960s that its usefulness for fire service use became widely recognised. It was in North America that the Snorkel was first adapted for fire-fighting duties.

The first application was in 1954 when the December issue of the publication *Fire Engineering* featured a short article entitled

**Top:** The first Simon Snorkel hydraulic platform to be commissioned in Britain was for Monmouthshire County Fire Brigade in 1963. Fitted with 65 ft booms, it served at Pontypool fire station and was later joined by other examples. (Ian More collection)

**Right:** Liverpool Fire Brigade was the first English fire authority to commission a Simon Snorkel. Entering service in late 1963, this was based on a Dennis F117 chassis. A second similar unit but with an unpainted aluminium cab was delivered in 1967.

'Mechanical Giraffe aids Firemen'. The article described the recent use of a public utility aerial platform at a fire in a New Westminster, British Columbia when two hose lines aimed from the vehicle's bucket helped quell a blaze in a downtown Army and Navy store.

"This novel unit, although not designed for fire suppression, provided a stable platform for fighting fire in upper floors. The versatile boom

will rotate 360 degrees, the upper boom moves up and down in a 170 degree arc while the lower boom moves in a 100 degree arc. The device is controlled by the operators on the platform".

Originally designed for picking fruit in orchards. The 'Giraffe' or 'Cherry Picker' was invented in the early 1950s, by Theodore T Trump of Oliver, British Columbia, with Pitman Manufacturing of Grandview, Missouri,





obtaining the rights to make it.

The use in New Westminster was an isolated event but, a few years later, whilst on a stroll back to his office after lunch, Chicago fire commissioner Robert Quinn reportedly stopped to watch a park tree-trimming crew at work. Quinn was amazed at the mobility the men had in the 'cherry picker' truck's bucket, and wondered why Chicago fire-fighters couldn't have the same kind of mobility.

In 1957, Pitman Manufacturing constructed a 50 ft articulating boom on a Chevrolet 354 truck chassis, to be demonstrated to electricity utility companies and, following a convincing demonstration to Chicago Fire Department officials, the unit was immediately sent back to Pitman for further modification and soon thereafter was placed into actual fire service use.



**Above:** Fire Armour supplied this Bedford TK with 50ft Simon 'Firefly' hydraulic platform to Worcester City and County Fire Brigade in 1964. This was the first combination fire pump and hydraulic platform to enter service with a United Kingdom fire service.

**Left:** The second combination pump-hydraulic platform was bought by Burnley Fire Brigade. Supplied by John Morris & Sons of Salford it was one of the few British fire engines based on a Leyland Super Comet chassis with Vista Vue cab. (The late Gordon Rothwell)

**Below:** The first English Snorkel designed especially for fire service use. Bodied by Fire Armour of London, the unit was demonstrated to various brigades throughout the country. Seen undergoing demonstration in Worcester, the local brigade was sufficiently impressed to put one of the first such units into service in England. (C S Shearman collection)



America's first fire fighting aerial platform, this rather crude looking appliance proved its worth at a timber yard fire a few weeks later. The Chicago firemen jokingly named the experimental appliance Quinn's Snorkel. This stuck and the Snorkel entered the fire service lexicon – and history.

Meanwhile, in 1955, at London's Royal Festival Hall, Simon Hydraulic Machinery, a branch of Thomas Adshead & Sons of Dudley, exhibited a 40 ft hydraulic platform, mounted on an Austin Loadstar chassis. Shortly afterwards, Dudley Fire and Ambulance Service adopted a demonstration model for 'various uses' and, while the tests were claimed to have been

extremely successful, the Snorkel failed to convince any fire authority to adapt one for fire-fighting purposes.

Six years passed before a Snorkel, adapted especially for fire service use, was manufactured. Built under licence by Simon Engineering of Dudley, this machine was mounted onto a Commer QX chassis with bodywork by Fire Armour Ltd. Fitted with Simon 'Firefly' DS50 booms and a 600 gallons per minute Coventry Climax pump, the machine was first exhibited at the annual Chief Fire Officers' Conference in Edinburgh, after which it undertook a series of demonstrations to various fire brigades throughout the country.







This HCB-Angus bodied Dodge K series with 50 ft hydraulic platform was still in service when photographed at Dundalk, Eire in 2004. However, its days were numbered, as a new German-built Magirus hydraulic platform was in the back yard, waiting to be commissioned.

Following this, Monmouthshire County Council became the first United Kingdom Fire Brigade to commission a Simon Snorkel appliance. Fitted with 65 ft booms, it entered service in 1963, operating from the county's Pontypool fire station. At the end of 1963, the City of Liverpool Fire Brigade became the second authority to place a Snorkel into service, this one based on a Dennis F117 chassis. Further orders followed from Durban, Johannesburg and Pakistan.

Originally, the Simon Snorkels were available

in two heights, 50 ft and 65 ft, but future developments would see higher versions being offered. The Snorkel was introduced at a time when traditional wheeled escape ladders were increasingly being declared obsolete, which prompted the introduction of a new class of appliance, the pump-hydraulic platform (PHP) especially developed to replace the pump escape appliance.

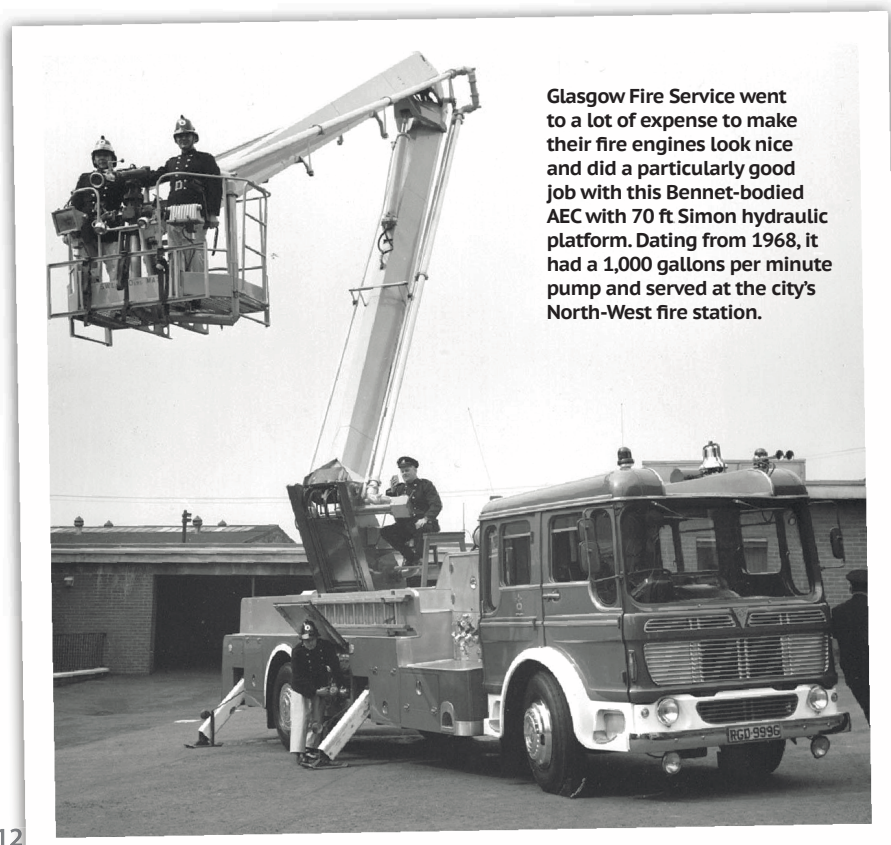
This new development comprised of a conventional pumping appliance, adapted to carry a 50 ft Snorkel hydraulic platform, which

was claimed to be the appliance of the future, the future standard first turn-out appliance. In 1963, Worcester City and County Fire Brigade was the first authority to order one, putting it into service at Kidderminster fire station in April 1964. Based on a 13 ft 11 in wheelbase Bedford TK chassis, the unit was fitted with a Gwynne pump and carried 200 gallons of water.

During the same year, Burnley Fire Brigade commissioned a Leyland Super Comet/ John-Morris PHP, while the following year, Halifax commissioned an Albion unit. However progress was slow and three years passed before another one entered service, a Dennis based example at Grimsby.

Thereafter examples were produced sporadically until 1976, when the last one was produced for Cheshire Fire Brigade. A total of 48 PHPs were delivered to 39 United Kingdom fire brigades, plus 11 for brigades in the Irish Republic. In addition, Glasgow Fire Service operated two 65 ft units mounted onto AEC chassis and a third Scottish example was based at Aberdeen.

The type met with more success in Hong Kong, where dozens were in service for many years but, in the United Kingdom, they were not the success they were supposed to be and all of them were ultimately replaced by conventional pumping appliances. Irish fire brigades, though, were particularly fond of them, buying eleven surplus British examples for further service in the Irish Republic. In 1967, Simon Engineering introduced a larger 85 ft hydraulic platform, which met with much more success, and this will be described in Part 2.



Glasgow Fire Service went to a lot of expense to make their fire engines look nice and did a particularly good job with this Bennet-bodied AEC with 70 ft Simon hydraulic platform. Dating from 1968, it had a 1,000 gallons per minute pump and served at the city's North-West fire station.



# MEADOWS SERVICES UK LTD

SOUTH WILTSHIRE

07734 829 626 / 01980 671 367



- \* Restorations to all classic commercial & military vehicles
- \* Full or part restorations tailored to your needs
- \* On site work undertaken nationwide
- \* Rates & timescale negotiable to suit all pockets
- \* Delivery/collection service available

FROM THE ORGANISERS OF SHROPSHIRE TRUCK SHOW & DONINGTON CLASSIC

## Classic Commercial show Malvern

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

CLASSIC TRUCK

AND CLASSIC & VINTAGE COMMERCIALS



JUMBLE  
TRADE STANDS  
VEHICLES FOR SALE  
MODEL SHOW  
CLUB DISPLAYS

THREE COUNTIES SHOWGROUND,  
MALVERN WR13 6NW  
CAR PARKING FREE • GATES OPEN 10AM

**Saturday 7th  
March 2015**

TRADE & JUMBLE 01775 712344  
07511 809993

AUCTION ENTRIES 01531 631122  
H.J. PUGH

ADMISSION  
ADULTS £10 / £8 IN ADVANCE  
CHILDREN (under 15) & FREE

CALL 24 HOURS - DAY TICKETS ONLY

**0844 995 9657**

[www.classiccommercialshow.co.uk](http://www.classiccommercialshow.co.uk)

Tel 01775 712 344  
info@i-e-m.org.uk

Independent Event Management Ltd reserve the right to alter or cancel any published attraction due to reasons beyond their control



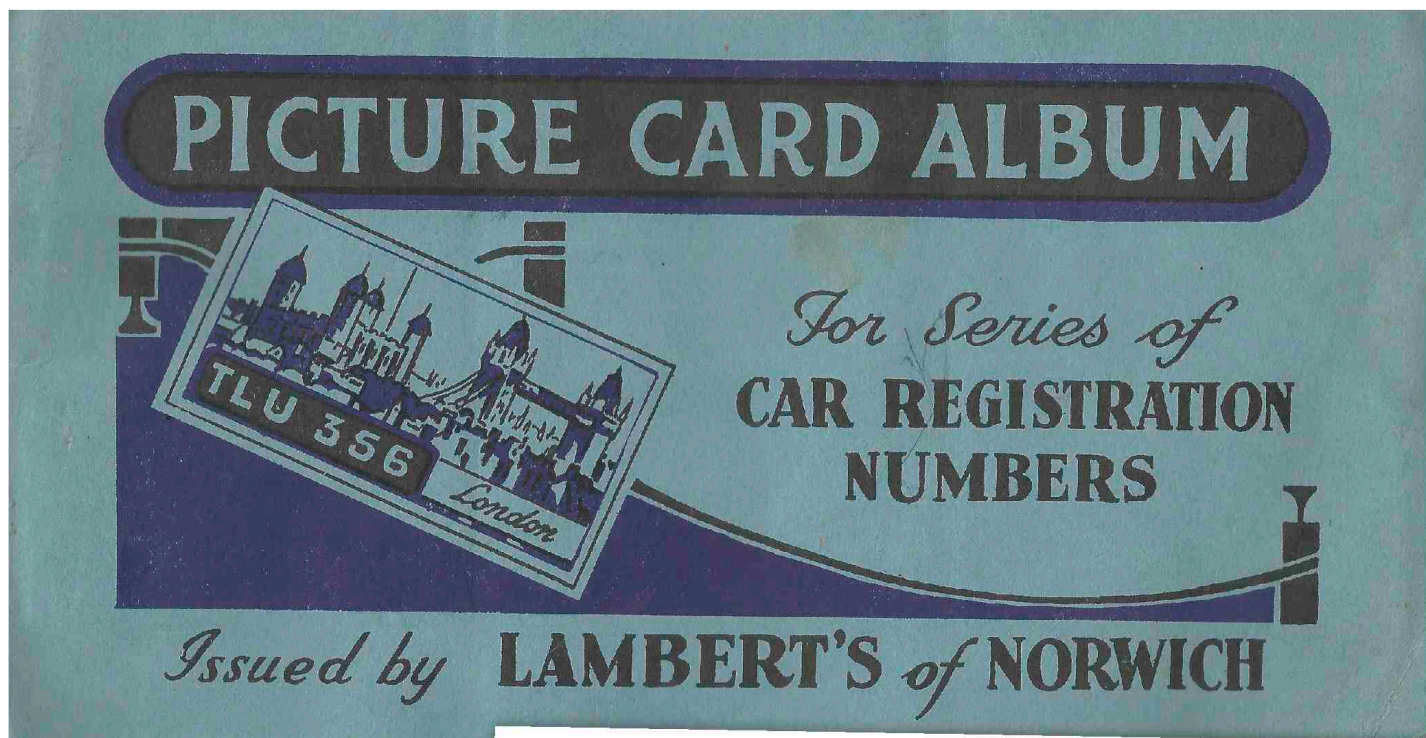
Don't forget

Shropshire  
**Truck show**



# Number Plates for Tea

*Mike Gosling shares with us a fascinating album of picture cards featuring registration numbers.*



Above and right: The picture card album – many of us would still call it a ‘cigarette card’ album – issued by Lambert’s of Norwich for its series of cards with Car Registration Numbers, issued with packets of Lamberts Tea, of which there were at least nine varieties. The album had eight pages, including the cover which advertised the tea products, with five printed to take the cards.

It is often surprising what you can find at yard sales. A few weeks ago, Mike found this interesting album at a sale in Norwich, which he thought would make a good follow-up to our articles on different aspects of registration numbers in issues 172-4, March-May 2014.

The album was issued by Lambert’s of Norwich, in which collectors could insert the cards, which were given free with every packet of Lamberts Tea.

I’m sure we can all remember the various series of cards which were issued by different tea companies, including Brooke Bond and Ty-Phoo, during the late 1950s and early ‘60s, which took the place of ‘cigarette cards’, being collected, swapped and competed with and for by many school-children, even when the cards were issued with ‘sweet cigarettes’ (now, of course, banned for corrupting our youth)



rather than tobacco products.

Perhaps this series is all the more remarkable since, at the same time, it covers a subject which, while it is of interest to us as transport enthusiasts, would not be expected to have the same general appeal as some of those I remember, like footballers, ‘freshwater fish’ and even ‘Transport Through the Ages’, and this series was issued by a smaller regional tea company.

There was a total of 25 different cards, each

with a recent registration from a county or county town, including London, Edinburgh, Isle of Wight and Isle of Man, plus an illustration of a well-known feature to be seen in the county. Under the space for each card was printed – as it probably was also on the reverse of the cards, information about the county; county town, population, industries, soil, chief towns and some typical recent ‘car registration letters’. You could say: “right up our street...”





Above: The first six cards showed registrations from Caernarvonshire, ECC 522 (late 1956), with a picture of Conway Castle; Warwickshire, VUE 674 (early 1957) with a thatched cottage; Isle of Wight, NDL 345 (mid-1956), with a picture of 'The Needles'; Cumberland, TAO 602 (end of 1956), with a stone bridge; Newcastle, the card which is missing; and Surrey, 263 BPL (a 'reversed' registration already in mid-1956) with a picture of The Pagoda in Kew Gardens. As an example, the details printed below the space for the card for Caernarvonshire are:- County Town: Bangor. Approx. Population of the County: 124,074. Industries: Agriculture (milk and meat), Slate, Stone, Quarrying. Soil: Grit, Shells and Slate. Chief Towns: Caernarvon, Conway, Pwllheli. Car Registration Letters: ACC, AJC, BCC, BJC, CCC, CJC, DCC, ECC, JC, EJC.



Above: The second selection of six cards included Oxfordshire, LBW 107 (late 1956), with a picture of the wool market in Witney; Devonshire, VOD 472 (early 1957), with a picture of the Mouth of the River Dart; Norfolk, VVF 603 (end of 1956), with a picture of a windmill and yachts on the Norfolk Broads; York, which is missing the card; Durham, VPT 923 (late 1956), with a picture of the cathedral; and Hampshire, RHO 313 (early 1957), with a picture of Winchester College.

The cards all showed registrations from 1956 or '57, which helps to date the album, while showing how some counties had worked through their allotted numbers much quicker than others. It would be interesting to know what vehicles had these registrations and whether any of them have survived. The style of the cards is actually quite dated, even for the 1950s, making them look somewhat older

than they are.

The person who collected these cards and stuck them in the album only managed 18 out of the 25, but there are enough to show us what it was all about – and there's some interesting information for us as transport enthusiasts, not to mention some rather attractive illustrations of suitable period-style scenes in each county.





Above: There are more cards missing from the third page of the album, Worcestershire, Blackpool and Chester. Three of the six are there, however, Edinburgh, PFS 405 (end of 1956), with a picture of Edinburgh Castle; somerset, XYB 727 (early 1957), with a picture of Cheddar Gorge; and the Isle of Man, VMN 123 (presumably from around 1956-7 – the island has always had its own rather complicated system!) with a picture of the Laxey Wheel.



Above: This page is nearly filled with cards, with only Hertfordshire missing; London is represented by TLU 356 (1957), with a picture of The Tower and Tower Bridge; Leeds, YUA 769 (1957), with a picture of Kirkstall Abbey; Cornwall, XCV 282 (late 1956) with a picture of St Michael's Mount; Gloucestershire, TAD 473 (early 1957), with a picture of the Cotswolds; and Essex, 304 HHK (mid-1956 – another county already using reversed registrations), with a picture of the village of Finchingfield, as used in Eastern National coach tour advertising. The last page just has space for the card for Kent, which is missing. The information on the dating of the registration numbers comes, as always, from the excellent and useful book on their history by L.H. Newall. We are sure that Mike Gosling would be delighted to hear from anybody who has any of the missing cards to complete the set in the album!



# BUS COMPANY Breakdown Trucks

*Phil Moth brings us a selection of interesting vehicles used by bus companies when they needed to recover their broken down buses.*



**Above:** For many years, the United Counties Omnibus Company depot at Bedford used this unusual recovery vehicle. Little can be seen of its origins, but it is a Foden GS of unknown vintage – but probably an ex-World War II military vehicle – purchased from British Road Services in July 1956. UCOC scrapped the cab and body and built a new body utilizing parts of Eastern Coach Works 'LS' coach style, together with a Harvey Frost 7 ton crane. The registration URP 999 dates from 1959, but the vehicle also operated on trade plates 596 BD and 210 BD. Seen here in the mid-1960s, it actually served faithfully until the early '70s. (PM Photography)

**M**any commercial vehicle operators used to provide their own breakdown service, as part of their overall maintenance operation. They would keep at the ready their own breakdown vehicle, which might vary from a light van to a heavy recovery vehicle equipped with a crane.

This was particularly true of many of the major bus companies, which could justify the retention of a vehicle which they would hope would see comparatively little use, by offering cover for breakdowns across their operating

areas, both for their own vehicles and others running on services into their areas.

Perhaps to a lesser extent, this was true of lorry operators, although some would send an ex-military Scammell, for example, slow and cumbersome as it might be, to the other end of the country to recover a non-runner, after either a breakdown or accident.

As a result of both the cost of having a vehicle on stand-by and also the need for something which could deal with towing a heavy vehicle – perhaps even extricating it from a ditch or worse – many companies relied on an ex-military vehicle or an old

member of the fleet converted for its new role.

These days, as a result of most companies contracting out their maintenance, rather than doing it in-house, coupled with the ever more complicated technicalities of recovery, not to mention the ever-present health and safety factors, most operators rely on commercial recovery services, which have to invest in the latest specialist equipment, meaning that the old hand-me-down, make-do-and-mend type of vehicles are a thing of the past. But here are some pictures of such vehicles to help us enjoy a few memories...





**Above and left:** This Atkinson ballast tractor started life with Bulwark Transport as an artic unit, registered 568 CWV. It was new in January 1964 and sold off some six years later, to the coach operator, Black & White Motorways, with its head office in Cheltenham. The Atki is shown here standing in Foden Way, the approach road to the Aldershot & District bus depot at Aldershot. The road name refers to a fleet of steam wagons the company operated almost a hundred years ago. The burnt-out coach on tow was FDF 345L, which had caught fire on the M3 when only a few months old. The Atki passed to National Travel South West, with the Red & White operations, but was replaced in 1976 by an AEC Marshall. (Les Smith)



**Above and right:** Many of the major bus companies used to convert former service buses and coaches to recovery vehicles, usually with the work done by in-house workshops. The most northerly major operator in Scotland was Highland Omnibuses and the company's AEC Regal is seen at Inverness. Operating on trade plates 040 ST, it had been new to Scottish Omnibuses in 1946, registered ESG 441 and passed to Highland in 1962. After three more years revenue earning service, the Duple body was cut down and a crane fitted for recovery work until the late 1970s. Also seen at Inverness is the 'business end' of VD 7373, the vehicle the AEC Regal replaced in 1965. It was a 1937 Leyland-bodied Leyland TS7 which had also been new to another operator, Central SMT, which passed to Highland in 1955. In 1958, it was converted for recovery work and fitted with what appears to be a homemade crane which was later transferred to the Regal. (PM Photography)





Pictures 1,2 and 3: A large number of bus companies employed the AEC Matador as a heavy recovery vehicle. Some were changed very little while others were completely rebuilt. THX 772F still has a military look about it, which is why it was used in the film 'Battle of Britain'. Carrying a Harvey Frost crane, it was bought by Timpsons of Catford from the dealer Vass of Ampthill. The Army registration number was 09 RD 47. It passed to National Travel South East and moved to Kelvedon depot in 1975 and is shown here at a Southend bus rally that year.

Doncaster Corporation's wrecker was run on trade plates, 035 DT, and can be seen to have undergone extensive rebuilding. Formerly with the RAF, registered 73 AV 93, it was acquired by the corporation in 1971 and ran on these trade plates until 1973, when it passed to the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, gaining the 'civvy' registration number EDT 644J. Thankfully it survives in preservation.

The expression 'the back end of a bus' comes to mind with PUY 660P! Wolverhampton coach operator Don Everall Travel acquired this Matador in the late 1950s and, at some point in the early '60s, it was rebuilt, utilizing the rear end of a Plaxton coach as part of its new bodywork. When no longer required by Everalls, it gained a new lease of life on the fairgrounds, as a generator tractor with Dobson Brothers of Birmingham.

(PM Photography)

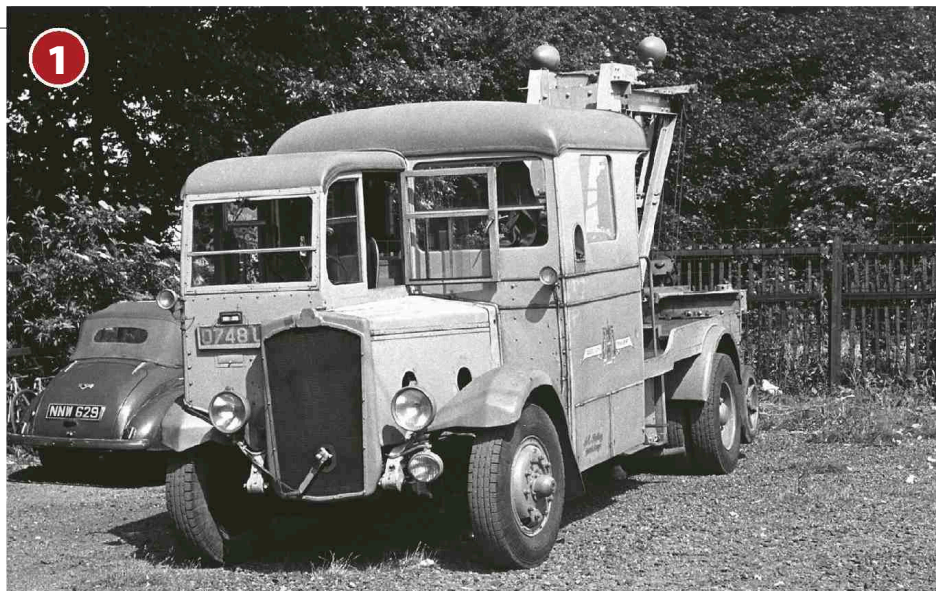




**Pictures 1,2 and 3:** New in 1931 to Leeds City Transport, this vehicle saw over 40 years service with the department. It was a Dennis Lance I, initially fitted with a Roe double-deck body, and operated throughout the 1930s as fleet number 111, until being withdrawn from passenger use and converted to a recovery vehicle in 1940. Fitted with heavy-duty recovery gear, which was probably multi-tasking, for use with buses and trams, as the railway-style crane is marked 'S.W.L. 10 TON'. The first two views show the vehicle in the early 1950s, while the third shows it in 1969, having acquired an AEC radiator and strangely showing its original registration number UB 7931. (PM Photography)

**Top right:** Canadian-built Ford F30 30cwt, JUO 54 was one of six bought from the War Department in 1946 by the Western National Bus Company. They were refurbished and entered service in 1947, at various depots around the West Country. No 54 was painted in Royal Blue colours and was based at a location outside the Western National area, at Bournemouth, hence the trade plate 264 EL. When over 25 years old it was probably transferred to Weymouth, until being sold in the early 1970s for preservation. It has recently been immortalized in the form of a model by Oxford Diecast. At Bournemouth it was replaced by a former 'Green Goddess' RXP 587, painted in the standard NBC yellow recovery vehicle livery, carrying the trade plate 264 EL. The Ford is seen at Bournemouth in the mid-1960s and the Bedford has made the long journey up the M3 to Victoria Coach Station in 1975 to recover a breakdown.

(Mike Stephens/Les Smith)







**Below:** Another two from the batch were registered JUO 52 and JUO 53. No 52 was based at Bideford for most of its life and is shown here at Winkleigh in 1971, after being secured by Colin Shears for the West of England Transport Collection. No 53 was initially based at Western National's most westerly depot at Penzance, carrying Cornish trade plates, 472 CV. At some point, it was transferred to Yeovil and is seen here in the garage entrance, bearing Somerset trade plates 672 Y. Thankfully it has since been preserved and is seen here on show at the home of the British Army at Aldershot. (PM Photography)







**M**y job was to find and put together topical feature articles, usually involving an operator who had something to say with reference to what was going on in the transport world at the time. At the end of 1983, this tended to be in relation to the increase in the maximum gross combination weight of artics from 32.5 to 38 tonnes on at least five axles. I say that, because, as well as the argument about three-axle tractor units with tandem trailers, versus two-axle units with tri-axle trailers, there were operators who went for six axles. And then there were lifting axle and steering axles – all of which had their fans.

Another 'in-thing' in the mid-1980s was 'computers'. These were the early days of using computers to arrange work schedules, check drivers' hours and wages and produce all sorts of paperwork, previously done with adding machines, typewriters and pencil and paper. The transport manager I worked with for a while at Eastern Counties Farmers in Ipswich, Ken Crane – a man of the old school – had said to me only a few years earlier: "All a transport manager needs is a sharp pencil and a rubber."

He was referring to the constant changes in the daily schedule of delivery work, as further orders came in and had to be fitted into the work-load. Did computers change all that? No, but there were those who sincerely believed that they were the answer to every problem.

I used to go and see these wonderful new systems in operation. There was usually a supplier – often a computer expert, some of whom also had some transport experience, to be fair – a transport manager, who was usually hoping that all this money he was spending on a 'box of tricks' was going to pay dividends and not be a waste of money, and an office junior, who had the unenviable task of actually sitting at a desk and making the thing work!

Of course, the photographic opportunities

Back in the mid-1980s, when **Mike Forbes** was working on the features desk at Motor Transport, he went out and visited many different operators with a story to tell. Here are a few pictures and memories of those times.



**Above:** I went to see the transport manager at Jordans, the makers of those lovely breakfast cereals and other goodies, at the company's factory at Holme Mills, just outside Biggleswade in Hertfordshire. He had just taken delivery of a double-deck trailer. These are much more common these days, but the idea of getting something like 40 pallets on a trailer, instead of 25 or so, was then something quite different, which the manufacturer – I think it was 'Don-Bur' – wanted to publicise. At least it was conveniently parked with an ERF C Series unit for photographs. Jordans' Transport Manager, whose name I'm sorry I can't recall off-hand, was equally proud of the fact that he personally looked after the boss's Ford Model T car, which he took me to see in his garage at home afterwards...



**Above:** Yes, I went to see the transport manager at the London Rubber Company at Enfield, because the company had decided to opt for a 'big engine' policy and invest in a Volvo F12, rather than a lower-spec vehicle, in spite of still running at only 32.5 tonnes gross. Keeping to the lower weight was not uncommon with own-account operators at the time, as there were often various other considerations, like warehouse layout, production batches – or maybe the product was light, but bulky. Amusingly, I had been to LRC for a job as assistant transport manager to the previous boss-man only a few years before. On that occasion, I caused some amusement, as I had not realised that Marigold gloves were not the only products LRC made and another of its brand names was 'Durex'...





**1:** I went to see a small company based in London's Docklands, called Southern Parcels. Its proprietor was a very 'hands-on' type of manager, who was driving a fork-lift when I arrived, breaking off to show me how the use of a computer to organise his deliveries had revolutionised his operations. Unfortunately, said computer was in the corner of a dark and grubby office – not a picture to sell the system to the big companies which the supplier was aiming at. But then neither were his vehicles. This DAF curtain-sider was only a couple of years old at the time, but wouldn't really inspire a prospective customer.

**2:** When I went to see Southern Parcels, I was only 'round the corner' from where my future wife had recently worked for time, managing the small fleet and tanker cleaning facilities for wine shippers, Porter & Laker, at 'No 5 Gate' of the London Docks, which were not quite dead then. Hardly a very salubrious job or location for a young lady. I grabbed this shot of one of the company's tanker trailers, behind a sub-contractor's Fiat tractor unit, rather than one of Porter & Laker's vehicles. I worked for one of these sub-contractors, driving a little Bedford TK or Ford D Series box vans, delivering cases of wines and spirits – but I'm not sure some of the stories are really suitable for publication...



were not that great. Yet more 'head and shoulders' photos of the people involved and a picture of somebody sitting at a desk with a computer terminal. So I would usually try to take a picture or two of the company's vehicles – always supposing there was something in the yard. Sometimes, there was only the yard shunter – not the most photogenic – so there was often a need for a little 'creativity'...

I have picked out some pictures which have a bit of a story attached, which I hope will strike a chord with some of you.

**3:** A reader recently asked for pictures of Smithfield Market in the 1970s or '80s and here we have one. I was obviously working on a story about the move away from Central London of both Covent Garden and Billingsgate fish market, contrasting with the congestion around the meat market, which was yet to follow suit. The Gardner-powered Seddon Atkinson 401 appears to have been based at Smithfield and conveniently appeared to prove the point about access for large lorries.

**4:** Contrasting with Smithfield, the entrance and exit, seen here, of New Covent Garden Market in Battersea, appeared quite spacious. It's still well into what most of us would consider Central London, so there are still access issues for large vehicles, but not what they used to be. Here is a Bedford TK curtain-sider in the grey livery of E Pordage of Norwich – I think the company is still going, an East Anglian reader can probably advise us, although other local fruit and vegetable merchants, like D & F McCarthy and Durrants of Lowestoft, both with green lorries, are long-gone...

**5:** One of my early trips, in late 1983, was to the Holiday Inn hotel, or whatever it was called, in Northampton, to see a new concept in road tankers, the 'Didak' all-polyurethane tank – you'll notice the lack of ribs on the tank on this Leyland Freighter of Shell distributor, Wm Cory. The separate, rather than fixed, access ladder is noteworthy. I don't know whether this was a concept which caught on – again, perhaps a reader knows. The highlight of this trip for me was seeing one of Northampton Corporation's late 1960s Daimler CVG6 'rear-loader' buses still at work, on my way from the railway station.





**Above:** Staying with the tanker theme, I visited the Charles Roberts works at Wakefield for a tanker feature, where I saw how this type of vehicle was traditionally built. This line of not-so-aptly-named in this case Leyland Constructor six-wheelers were waiting for delivery to Fina – another company I visited, but at offices at Epsom, with not a vehicle in sight.



**Above left:** When I went to Crane Fruehauf's factory at Dereham in Norfolk, to see the company's new range of standardised curtain-sider, tanker and tipper trailers being jig-built (we could show some of those pictures in a future issue if readers are interested) I came across this then recent Foden tractor unit, which had come to pick up a new trailer, which I thought was worth a photograph. Remember, this was in the days of film, which might have been paid for by my employers, was still not to be wasted.



**Above right:** This smart and obviously cared-for Seddon Atkinson 401 was collecting a new tipper trailer from Neville's factory at Mansfield(?) and was worth a shot for posterity. No doubt it's owners would have found a load for it to take all the way back to its Cornwall base. I think this visit was for a tipper feature. I remember George Neville himself, still in charge, despite his advancing years, and still having all sorts of new ideas, taking me into his experimental workshop to see his latest idea. Unfortunately, as a collector of model lorries, I was somewhat taken aback by the fact that his experiments had involved cutting in half a 'Shackleton' Foden eight-wheeler, a very rare and valuable model, so I've forgotten what clever idea he was making work!

**Right:** Evidence of George Neville's innovation was on hand, in the shape of this Leyland-badged Scammell Constructor 2 tipper for the NCB fleet, with an early type of mechanical sheeting system, long before these became commonplace and, indeed, mandatory these days.







**Above:** SPD, which stood for 'Speedy, Prompt Delivery' was once a major force in distribution. The company was a wholly-owned subsidiary of Unilever, so had a ready customer base, with many products delivered to local shops around the country. The rise of the supermarket chains, with their own 'regional distribution centres' (RDCs) and their own distribution fleets for consolidated bulk deliveries spelt the end for the services of companies like SPD.



**Above:** Lowfield Distribution was another 'player' in the same sort of market as SPD, but seems to have survived in the contract distribution market, although the orange and white livery on these box vans on the Dodge G-Series, a development of the Commer Commando, as discussed elsewhere in this issue, as they say, which was popular for distribution work in the 1980s, is as much a thing of the past as these vehicles – but then that's no surprise, is it?



**Above:** Here's an example of the way there would often be few relevant vehicles around for photographs, as in this instance, on a visit to Ackers Jarrett, the West Midlands-based commercial vehicle contract hire and rental services group, to quote Commercial Motor, where the only thing I could point my camera at, apart from a very large 'shed' was this Ford Transit van, sporting a long-forgotten truck rental livery.



**Above:** Before anybody starts thinking about how unreliable some vehicles were, this picture was taken at Metropolitan Vehicles, when I was talking to second-hand lorry dealers and shows a Fiat, Iveco and a couple of Seddon Atkinsons, if I'm not mistaken, undergoing contract maintenance, which made them more saleable when their first lives were over.

**Right:** Perhaps it was to show the company's faith in the products it sold, that Metropolitan used Ivecos, like this curtain-sider, in its truck rental and contract hire fleet. Or maybe this was a way of 'selling' its quota of vehicles – cynical, me? Maybe we'll have another selection of pictures from my days as a 'real' transport journalist (ha ha) and maybe I'll share some of those dodgy tales with you, if I can get away with it, without the publisher being sued...





# The Bull Nose Atkinson

*Atkinson Lorries delved into low volume bespoke manufacture on a few occasions, the most memorable being the rugged Omega. **Norman Chapman** tells the story of the much smaller SBT 946 XA model.*

The Atkinson SBT. 946 XA units were also used in ballast tractor form, as 121 EXM is seen here.



**W**ay back in 1960, Atkinson Vehicles of Walton-Le-Dale, near Preston was approached by Pickfords Heavy Haulage to develop a new heavy-duty tractor unit. Pickfords saw the need for a prime mover which could be built to its own specifications.

The process of specifying vehicles wasn't a new concept for Pickfords, as the company had worked closely with a number of lorry manufacturers. Scammell Lorries of Watford, especially, had built a number of special tractor units and trailers for Pickfords specific use.

Pickfords origins can be traced back to the 1640s, starting business as quarry owners and road repairers. Fast forward to 1960, the company was now operated by the British Transport Commission, alongside British Road Services (BRS), which had taken over the business in 1947.



Above: The standard tractor unit design, represented by 120 EXM, with a low-loader trailer.



### The first vehicle evaluation.

The first wagon which was ready for evaluation was configured as a 4 x 2 tractor unit and rated at 32 tons gross train weight (GTW). Another seven similar tractors would follow not long afterwards.

Two years later, in 1962, the first tractor was shown to the public on the Atkinson stand at the Commercial Vehicle Motor Show held at Earls Court, London. The vehicle had been given a rather complicated model designation, SBT. 946 XA, and the show vehicle's registration number was 295 EUV.

Atkinson issued a sales brochure for the vehicle, from which one assumption can be drawn. The company must have been trying to attract other customers, apart from its captive audience of Pickfords. One line from the brochure states: "This particular robust chassis embodies the following noteworthy features" and then goes on with the full specification.

### Item specifics.

The tractor was powered by a Gardner 6LX engine, with a bore of  $4\frac{3}{4}$ " and a stroke of 6". The six cylinder engine was rated 150 HP at 1700 RPM, hence the engines popular 'nom de plume', Gardner 150. The motor had a seven main bearing crankshaft, dry liners and twin cylinder heads. Gardner's own injection pump boasted excellent fuel economy using a centrifugal governor which controlled the amount of fuel injected. This engine choice by Atkinson was based on reliability and was born out of a long term association with Gardner engines based at Patricroft, Manchester.



**Above:** The first unit, 295 EUV, seen on the Atkinson stand at the 1962 Earls Court Commercial Vehicle Show, in a contemporary magazine picture.

**Below:** Atkinson 116 EXM is seen in good company, with a Scammell Handyman and two Bedford TKs, some time during the early 1970s.

The transmission consisted of a 16 inch single plate clutch, a six speed gearbox and a double reduction type rear axle. The Huddersfield-based company, David Brown, supplied the constant mesh gearbox, designed with 6th gear as an 'overspeed' and 5th as a direct gear. The wagon could achieve a top speed of 48 mph (77.2 kph).

The rear axle was provided by Kirkstall

Forge Engineering of Leeds, another long time associated supplier of Atkinson. The differential assembly was mounted on tapered roller bearings and was designed to be removed as a complete unit. The half-shafts were of the fully-floating type, which meant they did not support any part of the weight of the vehicle.

The front axle was a one-piece, high tensile







**Above:** Another of the Atkinsons, 899 GYX, is seen in ballast tractor guise, with a similar low-loader trailer to the one seen behind 120 EXM, but this time in draw-bar configuration. (Richard Stanier Collection)

**Right:** One of the six-wheelers, ALR 176B, during its working life, towing a bulk powder tank. (Peter Davies)

steel I-shaped section and had the king pins mounted with tapered roller bearings, making the wagon easy to steer. This was helped with a Marles cam and double roller type steering box, with all contacting surfaces being made of hardened steel and totally enclosed in oil. The design of the box guaranteed all wear and tear was minimised and subsequent backlash was drastically reduced.

The front and rear suspension was made up of semi-elliptic leaf road springs. The brakes were a full air system with type 24 diaphragm actuators fitted to all wheels. The front brake drums were 5 inches wide x 16 inches in diameter and the rears were 7 ins x 16½ ins. The handbrake was a single-pull lever, located to the left hand side of the driver's seat, with its operation assisted by a mechanical servo.

#### Mark 1 cab.

Atkinson utilised the MK 1 glass-fibre panelled driver's cab from the normal production model range. To access the engine for servicing and maintenance checks,





# Atkinson

## FOUR WHEELED SEMI-BONNETTED TRACTOR CHASSIS

Model SBT. 946 XA.



ATKINSON VEHICLES LTD., WALTON-LE-DALE, PRESTON, ENGLAND.

S.P.L. 115—May 1963

Above: Front page of the sales brochure.  
(R Stanier Collection)

Right: Second page of the sales brochure,  
showing the technical specification.  
(R Stanier Collection)

### Specification of

## ATKINSON FOUR WHEELED SEMI-BONNETTED TRACTOR CHASSIS

Model SBT. 946 XA.

This particularly robust chassis embodies the following noteworthy features:

**ENGINE:** The engine is the Gardner 6LX direct injection oil engine having 4 1/2" (120.6 mm) bore by 6" (152.4 mm) stroke.

Engine	No. of Cyls.	R.P.M.	B.H.P. at 1700 RPM	B.H.P. at 1100 RPM	K.G.M. Torque at 1100 RPM	No. of Main Bearings
6LX	6	150	485	672	7	

In the above model the crankshaft is carried in a deep section rigid crankcase, the dry lined cylinders being arranged in a single block, with detachable cylinder heads and overhead valve mechanism. Forced lubrication to all crankshaft bearings is provided by submerged gear pump housed in the large capacity sump, with strainer on both suction and delivery circuits. Cool air manifold and air cleaner is fitted as standard. Ample cooling is provided by the large diameter fan and centrifugal water pump, the system being thermostatically controlled. The particular feature of this unit is fuel economy ensured by the specially designed fuel pump, controlling by centrifugal governor the amount of fuel injected. Ready starting from cold by electric starter and unit, with clutch and gearbox, is three point mounted, with rubber insulation at each location.

**CLUTCH:** Is a 16" (406.4 mm) single dry plate type, provided with a clutch stop and ample adjustment to cater for full liner wear. Clutch slip torque is more than equal to all calls from the driver and yet smooth in operation under all conditions.

**GEARBOX:** The constant mesh type gearbox is mounted as a unit with the engine, and incorporates six forward speeds and one reverse; top gear is an over-speed and fifth gear direct. One change speed lever only is required.

Gear	Ratio	Road Speed in MPH	Road Speed in KM/H
Sixth	0.717 : 1	46.6	77.2
Fifth	1.0 : 1	34.5	55.5
Fourth	1.56 : 1	22.1	35.5
Third	2.43 : 1	14.1	22.8
Second	3.91 : 1	8.8	14.1
First	6.61 : 1	5.2	8.35
Reverse	5.76 : 1	5.97	9.6

All gears are in high quality heat-treated alloy steel mounted on large diameter rigid shafts, carried on bearings of ample capacity. The ratios are particularly selected to suit the various duties the chassis will perform, and are as shown in previous column. A Direct Top, Six-Speed Gearbox is available if required.

**TRANSMISSION:** Power is transmitted to the driving axle by one tubular propeller shaft, incorporating needle roller bearing wide angle universal joints and sliding coupling to allow full axle articulation. The shaft is dynamically balanced to eliminate vibration.

**REAR AXLE:** This is a double reduction type, the primary reduction being obtained by spiral bevel gears and the secondary reduction by double helical gears. The differential assembly is mounted on taper roller bearings and is designed to enable it to be removed as a complete unit. All gears and shafts within the differential assembly are made of alloy steel. The rear axle half shafts are of the fully floating type and do not support any part of the weight of the vehicle. The axle ratio is 6.25 to 1 with the following alternative ratios available: 7.98 to 1, 7.77 to 1, and 5.2 to 1.

**FRONT AXLE:** This unit incorporates a one-piece Z section high tensile steel beam of generous proportions, with forged steel hubs mounted on taper roller bearings. The king pins are ball jointed adjustable track and being mounted at the rear, ensure smooth riding under all conditions.

**ROAD SPRINGS:** Front and rear are semi-elliptic, alloy-manganese steel of suitable length sketched at the rear to ensure smooth riding under all conditions.

**BRAKING SYSTEM:** The footbrake acts on all wheels and is operated by air pressure, with type 24 air pressure diaphragms on front and rear axles. The front diameter and brake shoe widths being, front 16" x 5" (406 x 127 mm), rear 16" x 7" (418 x 178 mm). The single pull type handbrake, located to the left hand of the driver, acts on the rear wheels only and is mechanically operated throughout, with assistance from a mechanical servo.

**ROAD WHEELS AND TYRES:** Pressed steel disc wheels are carried on the hubs, by 10" x 22 (253 mm) diameter wheel studs, tyres being 9.00 x 24 single front and twin rear.

**STEERING:** Is of the Marles cam and double roller type, totally enclosed and working in oil. All contacting surfaces are of hardened alloy steel, wear being minimised and development of backlash practically eliminated.

**FRAME:** Frame silexmembers are of high tensile steel pressure 8 1/2" x 3" x 1/4" (209 x 76.2 x 9.5 mm) pressed steel crossmembers fitted with high tensile bolts.

**RADIATOR:** Is a one piece Matrix type, the unit being flexibly mounted on the front crossmember. Temperature control is by thermostat, allowing quick warm-up under cold conditions.

**FUEL TANK:** Is of 50 gallon (227.2 litres) capacity mounted on the underside of the chassis frame. Fuel is by Amal pump mounted on and driven by the engine.

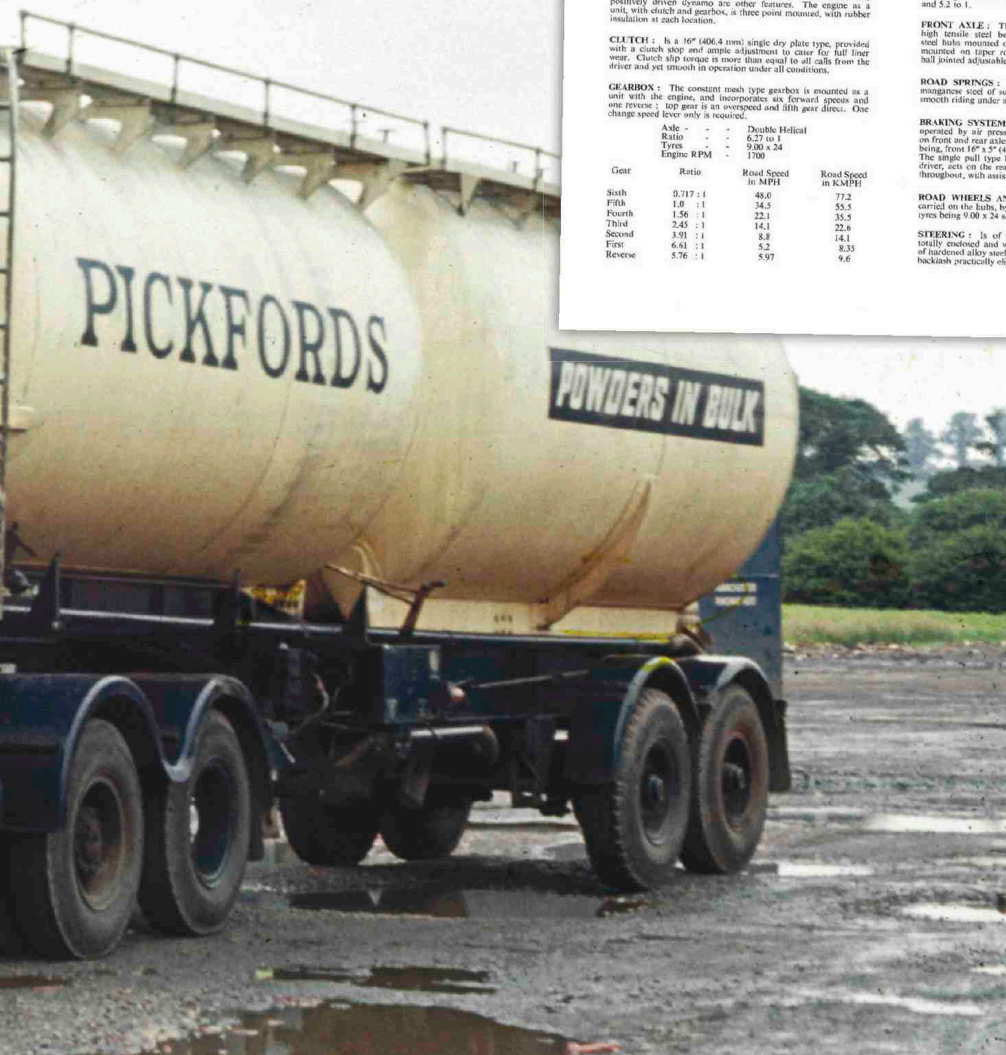
**ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT:** Is a 24 volt double pole system, with battery of ample capacity, instruments housed in a panel in front of driver. Twin head, side and stop tail lamps are provided, head lamps controlled by dipper switch.

**CHASSIS EQUIPMENT:** Includes speedometer, electric horn, hydraulic jack, rear number plates, grease gun, complete set of tools and wheel stud covers. Lubrication chart, wiring diagram, service manual and spare parts lists are provided with each chassis.

**EXTRAS:**

- De-Luxe semi-bonnetted cab.
- Cab heater and demister.
- Ballast blocks and body.
- Hand control trailer brakes.
- Vertical exhaust pipe.
- Front and/or rear towing members.
- Power Take off and controls.
- Details to conform to Porebium regulations.
- Seized wheel hub reduction rear axle.
- Fishing indicators.
- 9.00 x 20 - 14 ply tyres.
- 10.00 x 11.00 x 20 tyres.

ATKINSON VEHICLES RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ALTER THIS SPECIFICATION WITHOUT NOTICE.



the one-piece glass-fibre bonnet was made to hinge forward. For a little bit of cooling draught, there were two oblong opening side vents on each side of the bonnet. A De-Luxe cab was offered as an optional extra, which came with the added luxury of a heater with demister.

The front mudguards, one of the first things you look at when you see the wagon in the flesh, have more than a passing resemblance to an old Scammell design. As to why the front of the wagon was finished off like this can only be speculated at. It's as if the design team had run out of ideas. However, the most likely reason may have been as part of the Pickfords original specification.

Scammell had added this type of front wing to models including the Mountaineer, Pioneer and Constructor. These models, however

had the option of a driven front axle and a different type of front suspension, which was designed for operation on rough terrain. The Atkinson, on the other hand, was fitted with normal road going leaf springs.

The chassis frame was made up of 3/8 in thick high tensile steel U pressings measuring 8 1/4 ins deep x 3 ins wide. This set-up included a number of high-tensile steel cross members, fixed with high-tensile bolts.

On the foremost cross member, forward of the engine a Matrix type radiator was fitted. The electrical system was 24 volt and provided a starter motor and dynamo. In the cab, there was a driver's instrument panel, an electric horn and outside head and side lamps were fitted.

The SBT. 946 XA ran on 9.00 x 24 tyres with doubles on the rear axle.

As previously mentioned, Atkinson produced a sales brochure about the lorry.



This in itself seems strange, as the SBT. 946 XA was produced for Pickfords' own evaluation. To further enforce the thinking that Atkinson might have wanted to produce the semi-bonnetted tractor in larger numbers, there are a number of optional extras quoted in the brochure.

Among them, there were a hand control for the operation of trailer brakes, a vertical exhaust pipe, power take offs and controls, front and rear towing members and another three different tyre options. These were 9.00 x 20 14 ply and 10.00 or 11.00 x 20 sized tyres. The vehicle could also be specified with or without a ballast box fitted.

An important option, which had bigger implications for load hauling, was a Hypoid hub-reduction rear axle. This gave a wider scope and up-rated the wagon to 50 tons GTW.

### Two six wheelers produced.

More weight towing potential always gives more scope and, a while later, two six-wheeled tractor units were produced, able to haul much heavier loads. These were registration numbers ALR 175B and ALR 176B. The engine of choice was still the Gardner 150, and ALR 175B was fitted with the same David Brown six-speed overdrive gearbox as the four-wheeled type. The rear axles were again made by Kirstall of Leeds and both were driven.

The only major difference with registration number ALR 176B was that it was fitted with a ten-speed David Brown gearbox. It is unknown if this gearbox was part of Pickfords original specification or if it was fitted later in the vehicle's life. Maybe someone out there will know, so letters or e-mails to the Editor please...

ALR 176B as it now appears in preservation, after a great restoration job.  
(Gyles Carpenter)

Six-wheeler, ALR 176B, pictured in 2001 with re-styled front end and a heavy duty bumper.  
(Gyles Carpenter)



Four-wheeler, ALR 177B, seen at the HCVS Tyne Tees Run, at South Shields, in June 2007.





## What happened next?

After working for Pickfords, a few of these wagons just wanted to have a good time and they subsequently worked for showmen on the hoppings circuit. Two in particular worked for J Crow & Sons of Sunderland. These were the six-wheeler ALR 175B and one of the four-wheelers, ALR 177B. It was the six-wheeler which I first clapped eyes on, in the early 1980s at a hoppings fair. I had never seen this type of Atkinson before and I thought it was a showman's major modification project of a normal road-going model. It was much later when I found out it wasn't artistic licence on show, but the small volume, special semi-bonnetted type.

## Major restoration.

It's brother, ALR 176B has gone through a great deal of restoration work and is now seen at shows as a Pickfords-liveried breakdown wagon. The front mudguards were mentioned before and this area of this particular wagon has seen some activity over the years. If you look at the wagon in its Pickfords working life with the tanker trailer, the mudguards are wider than the normal ones. In the picture from 2001, drastic changes have been made to the bonnet and the wings have been squared off. The unit has been adapted into a crane wagon and a Bucyrus Erie crane bumper with tow hooks/hitch has been added. The latest design still has the bumper and the front mudguards have reached a pinnacle in design.

The SBT. 946 XA hardly, if ever, appears in any Atkinson histories, no doubt because only a few were produced. There was only a handful of the four-wheelers and just two of the six-wheeled tractors produced. That

**Below: The rugged Atkinson Omega heavy-duty tractor from 1958.**



**Above: Six-wheeler, ALR 175B, was the first semi-bonnetted Atkinson which Norman had ever seen, when it was operated by Crows Amusements.**

**Below: Two Scammells? No but you can see the resemblance. 115 EXM is seen alongside 580 EYO, one of the 65 ton Scammell Highwayman tractors. (HCVS forum AUS)**



aside, the best thing is that a few of them have been preserved for us all to look at and Atkinson can be praised for producing such a vehicle in the first place.

It is certainly a testament for Atkinson that a few remain and they are usually parked alongside look-alike Scammells at vintage lorry gatherings. If it wasn't for the circular A badge anyone can be forgiven into thinking, the SBT. 946 XA was indeed a Scammell.

## Registration numbers of the vehicles produced.

### 4x2:-

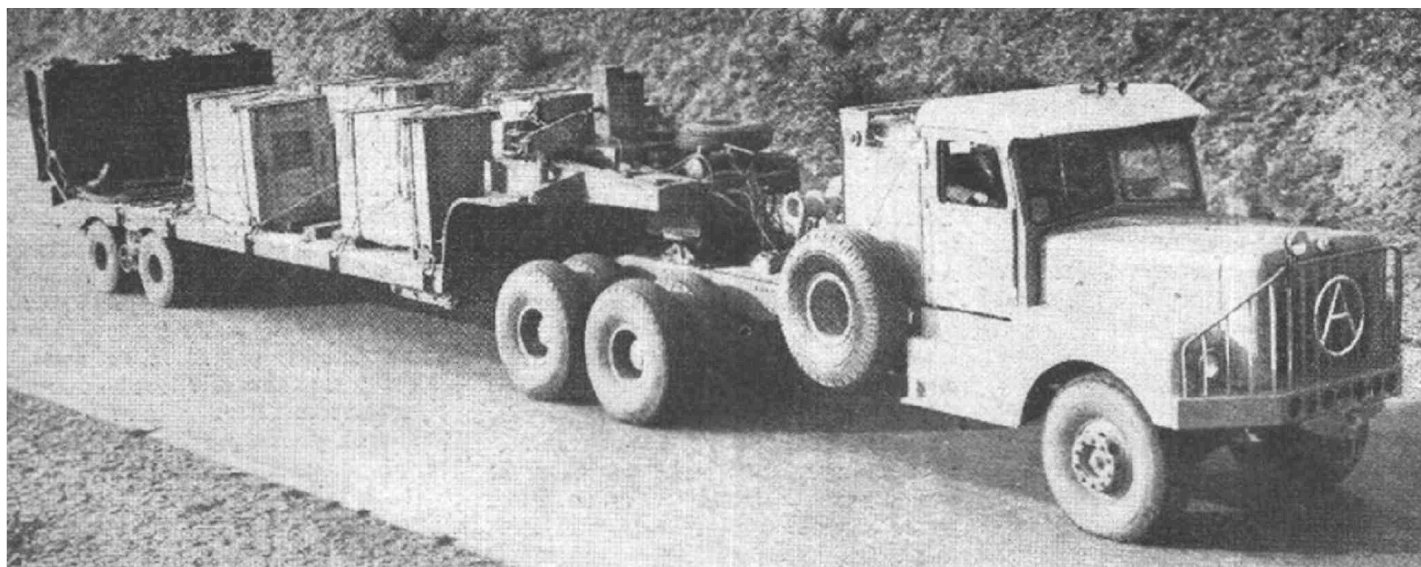
- 295 EUV
- 116 EXM
- 120 EXM
- 121 EXM
- 897 GYX
- 898 GYX

### 4x2:-

- 899 GYX
- ALR 177B

### 6x4:-

- ALR 175B
- ALR 176B





# EXTRA: READ ALL ABOUT IT!



## — Newspaper deliveries —

*Mike Forbes makes another selection of pictures of newspaper delivery vehicles from the Chris Hodge Stilltime archive.*

**W**e published a selection of pictures of newspaper vans in the March 2014 issue, which prompted a number of letters from readers with memories of these vehicles and a desire for more, so here they are.

This time, there is less of an emphasis on paper vans in the capital. We have some specially coachbuilt bodywork, as well as lightly modified and standard examples of light vans, plus a few open lorries, which

might come as a surprise.

Last time, I made a number of remarks about these vehicles rushing around our bigger cities and towns, the bundles of papers sometimes being thrown out on the kerb, for the newsagents and street sellers, by the 'van boy'. I also commented on the hard lives these vans led, with a somewhat more 'devil-may-care' attitude to accidents than our present-day 'elf 'n' safety' people perhaps would tolerate. Of course, a significant proportion of these operations

would take place at night – as can be seen in some of the pictures – so there were less obstacles to avoid in many cases.

In these days, when radio, television and, increasingly, the internet, bring us the news almost before it happens – at least it seems that way sometimes – it is still of paramount importance that the newspapers are delivered on time. They don't even have a secondary use as fish and chip wrappings now. It's just that the vehicles have changed.





**Top:** The Lancashire Evening Post also has this Ford V8 Pilot van, ERN 357 (Preston, 1952). It is seen here outside 51 Oxford Street, which must have been used as a sub-office for the paper, judging from the blanket advertising on the shop-front. It looks as if the schoolboys are collecting the papers for their evening paper rounds, while what looks like a smaller Ford 8 van round the corner was possibly taking some papers on to other distribution points. (CHC aao426)

**Right:** The Ford V8 Pilot van is seen again here, on a longer delivery run into the Lake District. Here some newspapers are being transferred to an Austin A40 10 cwt van, CCK 277 (Preston, 1948), at Great Clifton, on the A597 between Cockermouth and Stainburn. (CHC aao431)

**Left:** The Lancashire Evening Post is still going today, but in the 1950s had a somewhat mixed fleet of delivery vans, possibly the result of buying whatever was obtainable in those 'Export or Die' early post-war years. A number of these were photographed on a Commercial Motor visit to the paper's Preston offices. Here we have, most unusually, a classic-style Reliant three-wheeler, ECK 98 (Preston, 1951), a Morris ½ ton van, DRN 154 and a Standard Vanguard van, DRN 97 (both Preston, 1950), lined up outside the Guardian Office, in Fishergate, in the centre of Preston, ignoring the 'No Waiting' sign. Next door is Redman's grocery shop – also still in business – and Burton the Tailors. A 1940s GPO Morris-Commercial LC3 van is passing, with Redman's Bedford OL van, HND 605 (Manchester, 1946) parked to the rear. (CHC aao428)

**Right:** The Ford V8 Pilot van is seen in a most attractive setting, beside Lake Windermere. I'm not sure if we should be surprised that it has left hand drive – maybe the result of a frustrated export order – but quite handy for this sort of job although, perhaps as a newer member of the fleet, or making the most of its V8 power, it was more suited to longer distance runs. (CHC aa0435)

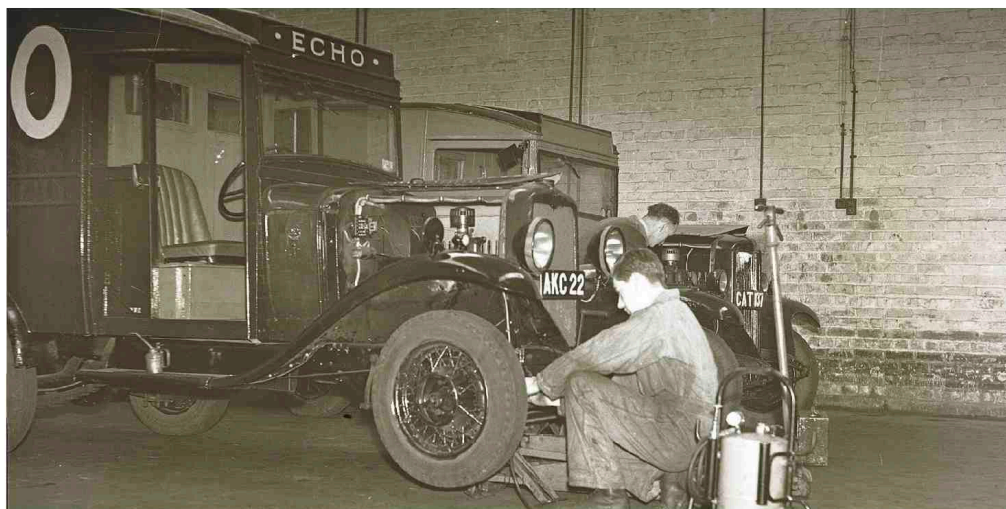




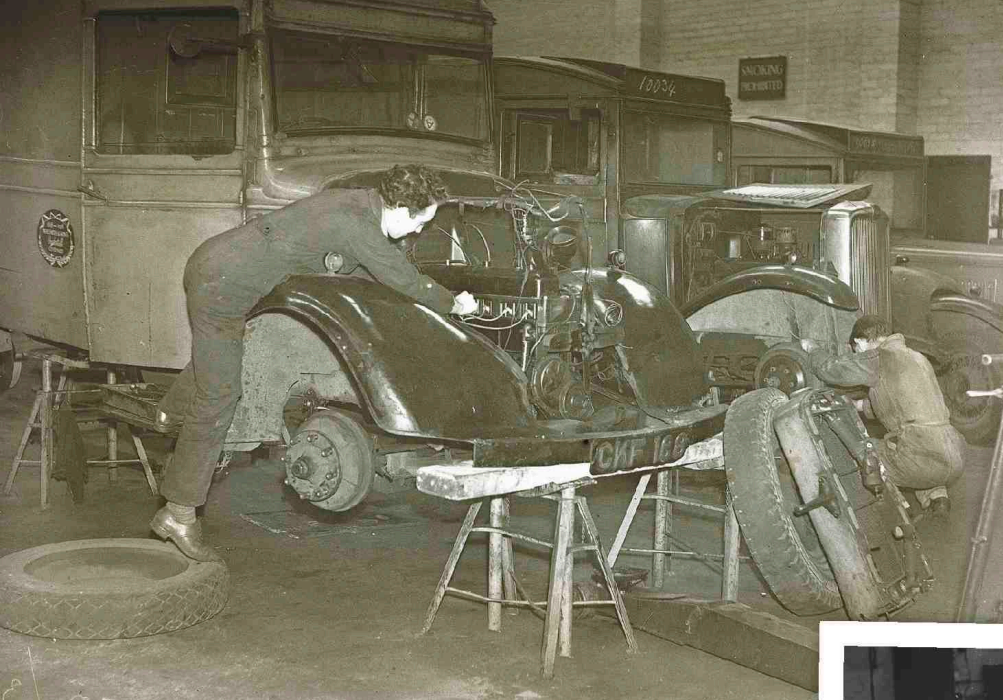


**Top:** The Lancashire Evening Post also ran this Austin K8 'Three-way' van, CCK 446 (Preston, 1948), although it is thought this was mainly a promotions vehicle, for use at outside events, with its side windows, rather than a delivery van. (CHC aao423)

**Right:** Moving to Liverpool now, with some pictures of vehicles undergoing maintenance, it is thought, by the contractor, quite possibly W H Smith, which delivered the Liverpool Echo newspaper, which is still published daily. Here are a couple of Bedford BYC vans, AKC 22 (Liverpool, 1934) and CAT 137 (Kingston upon Hull, 1936), which look recently re-painted, having some mechanical work done. (CHC aat359)







**Left:** More Bedfords receiving mechanical attention, including WS, CKF 168 (Liverpool, 1937) and a couple of BYCs. You'd like to think that bald tyre behind the radiator isn't going back on... (CHC aat348)

**Below:** This picture shows the extent to which some operators stripped their vehicles down for mid-life rebuilds. This unidentified Bedford BYC chassis will, no doubt, end up looking like the one in the background, probably the one seen in picture aat359. These pictures were taken post-war, when it was doubly important to keep these well-used vehicles running for a while longer. (CHC aat361)



**Above:** This time the Bedford WS integral van, EKA 991 (Liverpool, 1938), is in the livery of WH Smith, Wholesale Newsagents of Hornby House, Tithebarn Street, Liverpool, and the papers appear to be coming down a chute to the loading bank. (CHC aat362)

**Right:** We seem to have a lot of rear views this time, which will suit some readers, no doubt. Here another Bedford BYC, AKC 25 (Liverpool, 1934), this time lettered for the Liverpool Evening Express, is being loaded, literally from a 'hole in the wall'. Either the delivery staff were better dressed in those days, or they were all in their 'Sunday best' for the camera... (CHC aat351)

**Left:** The lady is completing the re-paint on another Bedford BYC, CAT 134, while the Bedford WS, DTO 763 (Nottingham, 1937) has been rubbed down ready for her attention. (CHC aat349)

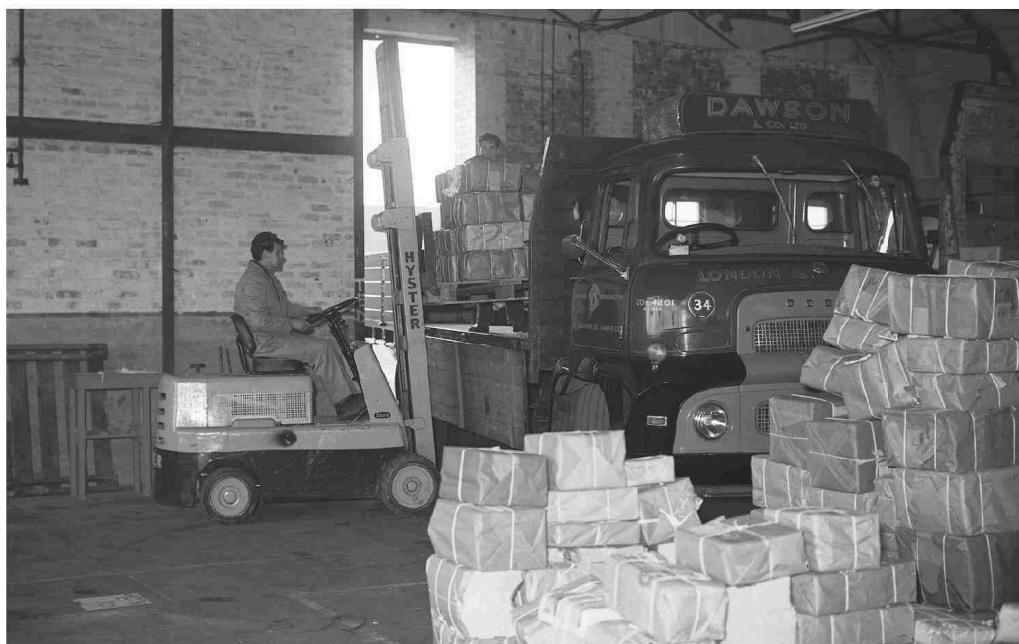






**Above:** It would seem not all newspapers and magazines were moved by light vans. Here, in the same sequence as the Liverpool pictures, but obviously not at the same time, we have an AEC, OO 6945 (Essex, 1961) of Dawsons, still well-known in the wholesale news trade today. It is at the premises of Wymans, another major company, which was taken over by Menzies, then in turn was taken over by W H Smiths. (CHC aat366)

**Right:** Another vehicle of Dawsons, which had bases in London and Warrington, a Dodge 300 Series, being loaded by a Hyster fork-lift with magazines, judging by the better packaging than the bundles of newspapers. (CHC aat364)



**Above:** We move to Manchester and the gloom 'underneath the arches', where newspapers appear to have been transhipped between the vehicles of J Whalen & Co, Haulage and Newspaper Delivery Contractors, of Manchester and Glasgow. Of the three dropside lorries in shot, the centre one is a Dodge, probably a ex-Canadian military wartime vehicle, with a 1947 Manchester registration, HVM 6, while that on the right is an earlier Dodge, CVM 258 (Manchester, 1937). (CHC aat761)



**Above:** More of Whalen's vehicles, a Bedford K Type, HNB 87 (Manchester, 1946), another Dodge, DNE 17 (Manchester, 1937), plus another earlier Bedford and Dodge to the rear, being loaded from what looks like a railway warehouse, as the drivers look on. (CHC aat765)



**Right:** Another Manchester newspaper delivery contractor was W A Dean, whose Thames ET6 dropside, ERJ 120 (Salford, 1950), is here flanked at the loading bank by a Dodge dropside, JVR 959 (Manchester, 1948) on the left, and a Fordson E83W van and another Dodge on the right. (CHC aat766)

**Below:** At yet another night-time location in Manchester, we find an Austin K2 dropside, FTJ 332 (Lancashire, 1949), with a ridge-pole for its canvas tilt, of Deliveries Ltd, Turner Street, Manchester, and a Fordson E83W, with a non-standard van body, MNA 83 (Manchester, 1951) of John Heywood Ltd, of Leigh, plus some other dropside. (CHC aat772)



**Below:** Presumably at the loading bank of the printers of the northern edition of the Daily Mail, judging from the signwriting on the dropside of the Thames ET6, EBA 965 (Salford, 1951), of Arthur Ch???, based in Arrow Street, Salford (can any local readers identify the company for us?), along with a couple of earlier Fordson 7V dropside, including ADK 155 (Rochdale, 1935). (CHC aat768)







**Above:** Now we move to John Menzies' warehouse in Edinburgh, where a new-looking Morris FG box van, ESF 559C (Edinburgh, 1965) is being loaded, along with other vehicles in the local delivery fleet. (CHC abi341)

**Below:** Another recent box van, DSG 951C (also Edinburgh, 1965) is loaded with papers, while an older Morris WE integral box van, NSF 165 (Edinburgh, 1955) arrives to load, along with the LD van to the left. (CHC abi343)







**Left:** The way things were, with another older Morris FG, XWS 415 (Edinburgh, 1961), with what looks like an LD van behind, on the platform alongside a railway parcels van, collecting or delivering newspapers for onward delivery. (CHC abi344)

**Below:** This Morris LD van, PSG 927 (Edinburgh, 1957) is seen backing up to the cargo hatch of a British European Airways Vickers Vanguard. These aircraft were being used in the mid-1960s for internal flights, which were carrying an increasing amount of urgent cargo – such as newspapers. (CHC abi348)



**Left:** Here's a shot full of atmosphere. An Austin FX3, bodied as a paper van for United to run on behalf of the Evening Standard – the only surviving London evening paper – NGF 489 (London, 1953), passes drinkers outside The Coach and Horses, still there in Whitefriars Street EC4, at the rear of the News of the World building, where reels of paper are being craned in from lorries, including Bowaters' AEC Mammoth Major III, SLW 296 (London, 1956), with an interesting style of coachbuilt cab, and an unknown Bedford OLB, which is presumably being loaded with scrap papers. (CHC aax847)



Finally, we return to the Capital, with a view of Tudor Street, EC4, where a Standard Vanguard in the red and black livery of 'The Star' – merged into the Evening News in 1960 – KXX 408 (London, early 1950), is passing the offices of The Observer and Northcliffe House, home of the Daily Mail. It is passing a rather smart mid-1950s Ford Zephyr Zodiac MkI, a couple of Morris Minors and several of the then rival Evening News vans, including two Bedford CAs and a Morris J2 or Austin 102. (CHC aax848)



# MORE ON DFDS at Grimsby

*Ray Newcomb has unearthed yet more archive material on the company's history.*



**B**ack in issue 174, we related how, during the late 1960s, a new subsidiary company, Anglo-Danish Food Transport Ltd, was set up, with the Danish Bacon board retaining a 51% share. The remaining 49% was offered to Joe and Jack McVeigh, as their company had traditionally handled the UK transport element of the bacon and butter shipments through the Royal Dock, Grimsby. Joe McVeigh became managing director of Anglo-Danish, with his nephew Terence as his assistant.

The Danish ferry company DFDS was to operate a twice-weekly roll-on/roll-off service from Esbjerg to Grimsby, with the ferry, MV Somerset, carrying up to 100 trailers. A special terminal, with two-level dock discharge system, to deal with tidal differences, was constructed, with plug-in electrical systems for the refrigerated trailers



**Above:** The folding forks fitted to the rear of tractor units used on Danish Bacon deliveries, seen in action, lifting a frame of sides of bacon from the trailer. This allowed split deliveries to smaller shops, butchers and so on. The tractor unit is an ERF, supplied by Thoroughbred Trucks.





Left, above and right: Three vehicles supplied through Thoroughbred Trucks, J287 CFU, an ERF E6 four-wheeled curtain-sider, S733 SFU, an ERF EC11 6 x 2 tractor unit, both for DFDA Transport, and M633 MEE, an ERF EC10, for HTL (a merger of Humberside and Harwich Transport within the DFDS group).

Below left: The staff of Thoroughbred Trucks, with manager, Vic Galyer, with their Quality Assurance certificate.

Below right: Vic Galyer hands over a new ERF 6 x 2 tractor unit to Paul Snell, fleet engineer at DFDS, with an older Seddon Atkinson and Danepak trailer behind.







Above: Joe McVeigh giving an opening speech on behalf of the Grimsby division of Anglo Danish Food Transport, with J Dons Christensen on the left, in front of one of the company's AEC Mercury tractor units.

Right: A letter from Terry McVeigh, managing director of Anglo Danish Food Transport, to Peter Foden, suggesting the setting up of a dealership in Grimsby, which became Thoroughbred Trucks.



ANGLO DANISH FOOD TRANSPORT Ltd.

Estate Road No 2 South Humberstone Industrial Estate  
Grimsby DN31 2TE Telephone 0472 58275 Telex 52409

OUR REF TJM/KAR

E.R.F. Ltd.,  
Sun Works,  
Sandbach,  
Cheshire,  
C.W.I. 9.D.N.

24TH JUNE, 1987

FOR THE ATTENTION OF : MR PETER FODEN

Dear Peter,

It is some time since we last met and indeed, some time since we purchased our last ERF. You will no doubt recall that at one time we operated some 60 ERF tractor units.

Our current fleet of vehicles is 54 and each year when we replace we consider ERF, but generally speaking we have been unhappy with the dealership and service support at our Grimsby and Colchester depots. The last vehicles supplied to our Colchester depot went through Peterborough and we had considerable problems in routing vehicles back for guarantee problems and with prompt service support.

It occurs to me that we may be able to help one another if we were appointed a dealer at Grimsby and a service agent at Colchester. Apart from our own requirements for 10/12 vehicles a year, both these depots are close to the most intensively used container ports in the U.K. Immingham, Grimsby, Felixstowe, Harwich, Ipswich.

I understand that John Hebb near Immingham sells more VOLVOS than any other Volvo dealer in the U.K. and Scania and Mercedes are also very strongly represented in both areas.

We are diversifying our business and we have excellent workshop and depot facilities at both locations. Furthermore, we have the backing of our parent company E.S.S. FOOD, COPENHAGEN who have worldwide sales of pig-meat in excess of £500m. annually.

We would welcome the opportunity to develop this suggestion with you and would suggest the best location would be Grimsby in order that we can show you our premises.

Yours Sincerely

Terence J. McVeigh  
Managing Director



Above: Ess-Food was the trading name of Anglo Danish Food Transport, which used Leyland Super Comet tractor units like this in Denmark.

awaiting distribution. A four to five hour turn-round was the target, because of the dock's tide-controlled gates. The vessel had to be turned round on a single tide, come what may.

As related last time, there was a fleet of special refrigerated 20ft box trailers, initially pulled by equally special Leyland-badged LAD-cabbed Albion Chieftain CH13ANT 'Super Six' long wheelbase tractor units in the UK, fitted with folding fork-lifts at the rear. Over the years, the Leylands were replaced by AEC, Atkinson, ERF, Foden, Mercedes-Benz and Scania tractor units, while these days, the special trailers have been replaced by standard 40ft, then 13.6 metre refrigerated box trailers.

In 1971, Anglo-Danish moved to purpose-built premises away from the docks, with cold storage and workshop facilities, which later became an ERF dealership. It is now 25 years since Anglo-Danish Food Transport Ltd was absorbed into the DFDS (UK) Group in 1989, but the company owed a lot to Joe McVeigh, whose personal skill and transport expertise made the company such a success.

DFDS (Det Forende Dampskibs Selskab – meaning The United Steam Ship Company) was founded in 1866, by Carl Frederik Tietgen. It worked with Thomas Wilson & Co (later Ellerman's Wilson Line) as shipping

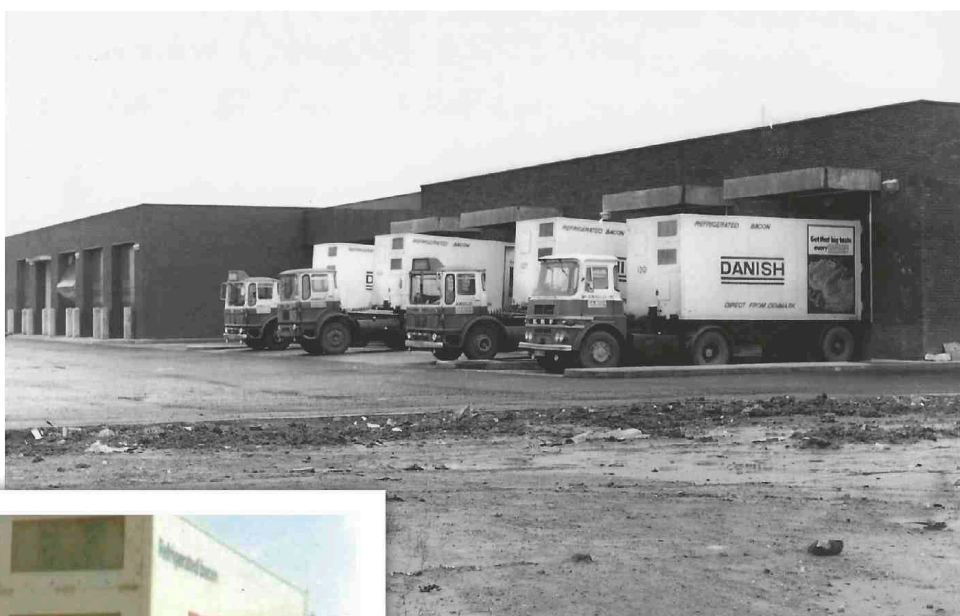




**Above:** A view of the custom-built 'ro-ro' – roll-on, roll-off terminal built at Grimsby for Danish bacon and butter imports. The other traffic seen in the foreground was loaded after the Danish trailers, which can be seen lined up to the rear alongside the ship.

**Right:** A picture of the new depot at Grimsby. The rough area in the foreground is where the new cold store and distribution hub would be built. The ERF LV-cabbed tractor unit covered 600,000 miles before being sold and was still running well. The driver, Dave (Granny) Whitton didn't want an Ergo or B-Series, so the company kept this one for him.

**Below:** A number of owner-drivers sub-contracted for DFDS, with vehicles in the company's colours, like Allan Henrickson of Goole, who ran two Perkins-powered Seddons, one of which he drove and the other by his father, also Allan.



agents in London and Harwich. DFDS (UK), now DFDS plc, was formed in 1970, acquiring various UK haulage companies, like E O Hooks of Harwich in 1975, Greaves & Lamming of Grimsby in 1979. The resulting Humberside Transport and Harwich Transport merged in 1995, to form HTL Transport Ltd, which it would appear, is no more. The vehicle dealership, known as Thoroughbred Trucks is thought to have been a victim of the MAN take-over of ERF.

The UK transport arm of DFDS is now a company known as DSV, which looks after the distribution of the Danish bacon and butter, using vehicles carrying 40ft containers.





**Above:** Going back further in time, Sammy Sutton poses in front of his ERF in the fleet of McVeigh Transport, with his twin sons in the cab and three daughters, having called at his house to pick up his case before leaving. That's the way things were done in the 1950s-60s.

**Right:** A note from the boss to Sammy, thanking him personally for a job well done with an awkward crane jib load, inviting him and his mate for a drink. What a nice way to do business...

**MCVEIGH TRANSPORT LIMITED**

MENTAL MEMORANDUM

DATE 3rd July.1961.

TO: Mr.S.Sutton,  
Grimsby.

PERSONAL.

YOUR REF.

SUBJECT

Dear Sam,  
Grimsby phoned me this morning to say that you had arrived at destination with the crane job/jib!!!!.

Whilst I may have the reputation of always being ready to kick a man in the pants when he does anything wrong I also try to express my gratitude for a job really well done.

I would like you and your mate to have a pint or two of beer with me, this is quite personal and nothing whatever to do with the Company. I have for many years admired your diligence and loyalty and never seem to be able to say to you personally that I would like you to join me in a drink.

Again my thanks and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

*Sammy Sutton*

SGG WING ROAD OCT 1961  
Next



**Left:** A 1966 AEC Mandator, GEE 13D, and tandem trailer of McVeigh Transport, seen loading at Immingham Docks in the late 1960s.

**Bottom left:** Ford & Slater supplied these Albions new to the Hull Fish Meal & Oil Company, 5361-4 RH (Kingston-upon-Hull, 1962), seen in a picture given to Ray Newcomb at the Lincolnshire Steam Rally in 2014.

**Below:** A new Atkinson Borderer tractor unit, SEE 197H, posed at Irby Hill Top when brand new in 1970.







Above: The top job in the 1960s was considered to be with Peter Dixon's West Marsh Paper Mills in Grimsby, in operation from 1906 to 1973, with no 'handball' and no return loads. Ron Sink is seen on the left of the picture.



Above: Dave McVeigh presenting clocks to staff as wedding gifts. The picture was taken in the warehouse at the Convamore Road depot – fishing floats can be seen on the right – and shows Joe McVeigh, Ron Spink, Johnny Johnson, Ron Aisthorpe, 'The Black Prince', Jimmy Etchell and Charlie Royal, while Bill Newcomb is in the top row, second from right.

CRANKSHAFT BEARING  
SURFACE GRINDING  
CLINCHING BEARING  
BEARING REPAIRING  
ENGINE REPAIRING  
ENGINE TESTING

ALBION - BEDFORD  
LEYLAND  
TRUCKS - PERKINS

**FORD & SLATER (LIMCS.) LTD**  
MOTOR ENGINEERS  
MACAULAY STREET  
GRIMSBY

TELEPHONE  
GRIMSBY 57181/2

Our Ref. RD/DP. Your Ref. Date 12th November, 1964.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ORDER**

Customer **Haulage Contractor,** Serial No.  
Address **Lincoln.**

Dear Sirs,  
We thank you for your valued order, which we have pleasure in accepting, in accordance with the details as entered below and our standard conditions of sale printed on the back hereof.  
This order is receiving our best attention.

Yours faithfully,  
**FORD & SLATER LTD.**  
Director

Your Order No.	Date of Order	Date of Delivery (see over)	Prices	Total
Details of Order				
One (1) New Albion 'Super Reiver' Model RD27H, 15'0" wheelbase, chassis and cab, fitted with a Power Plus 4008 Diesel Engine, hub reduction double drive rear axles, mounted on 10.00 x 20 (Radial Ply) front tyres and 900 x 20 (12 ply) rear tyres, all to manufacturer's Standard Specifications.				
6 Speed Gearbox.			2825	0
Supplying and fitting spare wheel, tyre and tube.			20	0
" " " spare wheel carrier.			33	0
" " " cab heater and demister.			13	0
" " " flashing indicators.			16	0
" " " front shock absorbers.			10	0
" " " front bumper bar.			5	10
Supplying REDRO Model 5M winch with hydraulic tipping gear.			245	0
" " " fitting charges to chassis and body.			24	10
Supplying and fitting wooden tipping body 20'0" long, 7'6" wide, with 2'6" high trouble drop plain sides, steel lined softwood floor, hardwood to cab height, aluminium cross bearers, complete with rope hooks.			285	0
Supplying and fitting steel longitudinal runners 7"x3".			30	0
" " " steel rear wings.			22	0
" " " mudflaps.			6	0
" " " 11 grade number plates.			2	10
Printing and lettering to your instructions.			50	0
Delivery			3596	10
Less allowance for 8/11. 1964 Bedford Tipper.			700	0
Terms of Payment			2896	10
Delivery Charges Extra.				

Above: A 1964 quote from Ford & Slater of Grimsby for an Albion Reiver six-wheeled tipper, with a 1960 Bedford tipper taken in part-exchange. The details and prices make interesting reading.

**... BUT NOT AT THE**  
**Blue Boar**  
M1 WATFORD GAP  
Meals Snacks Cigarettes Derv etc

**98 CLAPHAM ROAD - LONDON S.W.9**  
**You will Be Welcome at CLEM'S DIGS**  
PHONE 0845 136 154

**Jack's Hill Cafes**  
JACK'S HILL 1 GRAVELEY A.1 NEAR STEVENAGE  
JACK'S HILL 2 ARBINGTON A.14 TEL: 338 (Sleeping accommodation)  
JACK'S HILL 3 TOWCESTER A.5 TEL: 502 (Sleeping accommodation)  
JACK'S HILL 4 SANDY A.1  
24 HOUR SERVICE AT JACKS HILL 1 & 3

**With Regret**  
Will all customers at Colgate Transport Cafe & Haulage Station, Grimsby (A.74), please note that we will be closed for the purpose of staff holidays from 11.30 p.m. on Friday 19th July until 10.00 p.m. on Saturday 20th July.

**STAFFORD**  
17 Cornhill Road, Bore, Essex  
Phone: 0206 214141

**IVY HOUSE**  
35 STATION ST., POSE DON VALLEY  
Phone: 01924 214141

**PG & IN GUEST HOUSE**  
"Newman Arms" - Newmarket Road  
Phone: 01924 214141

**DEVON TRANSPORT CAFE**  
100, High Street, Exeter  
Phone: 0392 214141

**MAV'S TRANSPORT**  
100, High Street, Exeter  
Phone: 0392 214141

**GRAVESEND**  
100, High Street, Exeter  
Phone: 0392 214141

**1883**  
Foden's  
progress with  
**Foden**

The driver of an 1883 steam wagon can hardly have led a very sheltered existence! But as vehicle design developed, Fodens always kept his interests very much at heart.

**FODEN LIMITED, ELWORTH WORKS, SANDHALL, CHESHIRE**  
Telephone: Sandhalls 041 (14 Lines) Lintels: Sandhalls 041 (14 Lines) Telex: 041 (14 Lines) Telex: 041 (14 Lines)

Above: A couple of pages from mid-1960s drivers' magazines, with adverts for 'digs' and transport cafés. How many of these are still open?



### DELIVERY / PAYERS DETAILS

Email .....

## GIFT DELIVERY DETAILS

Daytime phone ..... Mobile .....



**£19.68 taken every 6 months (SAVING 20%) PLUS FREE GIFT**

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Name of Bank .....

Address .....

Postcode .....

Account name .....

Sort code                      Account number

Signature ..... Date .....

Originator's Id number

Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Kelsey Publishing Ltd. and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.



☐ USA / EUROPE: 12 issues at ~~£63.49~~ **SAVING 10% £57.14 (NO GIFT)**

☐ REST OF WORLD: 12 issues at ~~£69.75~~ **SAVING 10% £62.77 (NO GIFT)**

☐ I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to Kelsey Publishing Limited (drawn from a UK account)

☐ Please debit my ☐ Visa ☐ Visa Debit ☐ MasterCard for £.....

Card number

Security number 

--	--	--

Valid from ..... / ..... Expiry date ..... / .....

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**(UK ONLY) PLEASE SEND COMPLETED FORM TO:**

FREEPOST RTKZ-HYRL-CCZX, Vintage Roadscene Subscription, Kelsey Publishing Ltd., Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent, TN16 3AG

**(INTERNATIONAL ONLY) PLEASE SEND COMPLETED FORM TO:**

Vintage Roadscene Subscriptions, Kelsey Publishing Ltd., Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent, TN16 3AG

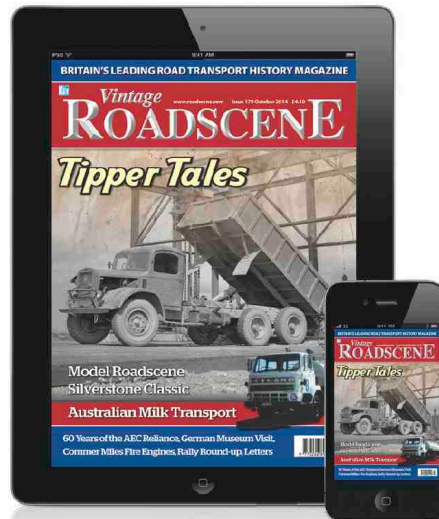
 INTERNATIONAL ONLY PLEASE CALL: 0044 (0)1959 543 747

\*FREE gift subject to availability, we reserve the right to offer an alternative product at the same or higher retail value. On receipt of your order your free gift will be delivered within 25 working days. Offer/prices available until 28th February 2015. Kelsey Publishing Ltd., uses a Multi Layered Privacy Notice giving you brief details about how we would like to use your personal information. For full details visit [www.kelsey.co.uk](http://www.kelsey.co.uk) or call 01959 543524. If you have any questions please ask as submitting your data indicates your consent, until you choose otherwise, that we and our partners may contact you about products and services that will be of relevance to you via direct mail, phone, email and SMS. You can opt-out at ANY time via email on [data.controller@kelseybv.co.uk](mailto:data.controller@kelseybv.co.uk) or call 01959 543524.

## OFFER 1. DIGITAL EDITION

**FREE** VINTAGE  
ROADSCENE APP AND  
SAMPLE ISSUE

**PAY JUST £29.99  
FOR 12 ISSUES  
AND SAVE 16%\***



\*16% saving based on digital cover price of £2.99 per issue.

AVAILABLE ON  
THE APP STORE AND  
POCKETMAGS.COM



**pocketmags.com**

**[pktmags.com/vintageroadscene](http://pktmags.com/vintageroadscene)**



# SUBSCRIBE TODAY

## WHICH ONE SUITS YOU?

OFFER 2. **UK PRINT EDITION WITH FREE GIFT**

### FREE WORKTOUGH CHUKKA BOOTS WORTH £21.95

**This month we are offering UK subscribers a fantastic FREE pair of WorkTough Chukka boots worth £21.95.**

These fantastic safety boots are smart yet highly durable. They benefit from steel toe-caps and a padded tongue for all round comfort. It is a classically styled boot suitable for all trades, the ultimate in quality and comfort and with solid construction, they are made to last. Get yours FREE when you subscribe today!

- Black Leather Steel Toe Boot with Padded Bellows and Tongue
- Internal Steel Toe (200 Joules) to EN345 S1
- Outer Material: Leather
- Inner Material: Fabric
- Sole: manmade
- Closure: Lace-Up
- Shoe Width: Regular
- Antistatic Dual Density Polyurethane Sole



\*20% saving based on cover price of £4.10 per issue. UK Direct Debit print offer only.

PAY FROM JUST  
**£19.68**  
**FOR 6**  
**MONTHS**  
SAVING 20%\*

**2** EASY  
WAYS  
TO  
ORDER

#### POST

Fill in the form and send to: **FREEPOST RTKZ-HYRL-CCZX**  
**Vintage Roadscene Subscriptions, Kelsey Publishing Ltd.,**  
**Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent, TN16 3AG**

#### CALL OUR SUBSCRIPTION TEAM

**0845 241 5159** UK only and quote offer code VRP103

Hotline open: Mon - Fri 8am - 6pm. Please note that calls are charged at your local rate, for further information please check with your service provider.



# Blackpool Day Out – Yes Please!

*Bill Berry relates his experiences at the Bus Driver of the Year competition.*

**E**ager as I always am to help the police in their sterling work I leapt into immediate action whilst watching a recent episode of 'Crimewatch'. They had shown a photo of a person wanted by the police and asked the question: "Do you know this man?" I was on the phone straightaway: "No", I said.

I mention this because in the excellent publication 'Commercial Classics' there is an article on the Lorry Driver of the Year Competition and the editor asks for contributions from anyone with knowledge or memories of this event. Well, I know nothing of the LDOY competition, but I do have fond (and sometimes frightening) memories of its passenger transport equivalent, the Bus Driver of the Year Competition which I hope may prove to be of interest.

I have previously alluded to my involvement in

this event in a series of articles which the editor was kind – or misguided – enough to publish about my years in the bus industry but I hope that I may now put some flesh on the bones of that reference.

The Bus Driver of the Year Competition was first held in the late 1960s and became an annual event in the following decade. Entry is open to any driver employed by a bus operating company who is free of blameworthy accidents in the 12 months up to 30th June. The national final takes place – usually in Blackpool – early in September.

I first entered the competition in 1985, while I was employed by the Bristol Omnibus Company and based at Muller Road depot in Bristol. The BOC at that time operated both Bristol city services and country services from Bristol to surrounding districts, and the local heat was divided into these sections, with an

overall winner who would go forward to Blackpool to represent the whole company.

We entrants duly gathered at Lawrence Hill depot in Bristol one Sunday morning, and underwent a series of driving manoeuvres in the yard, as well as sitting a Highway Code test paper. There had also been – we discovered on the Sunday – an 'observed run' by an outside examiner and penalty points from this were added to the mix. Notwithstanding all my faults and blemishes, I came runner-up in the city section of the heat and received a cup, which I retain with some pride to this day.

In the years following, as I have described in my previous articles, I chopped and changed jobs within the industry and lost sight of the BDOY. On rejoining First Somerset and Avon in Bristol in the mid-1990s, I once again became aware of the competition and entered the local heat. I was subsequently lucky enough to reach the

Blackpool finals in five successive years but more of that anon.

The local heat varied in intensity over the years; one year we were taken 'en masse' to Bath depot to sit the Highway Code paper in classroom conditions in the training school; another year I reported for a middle shift and the driving instructor saw me and said: "Ah, now you're here, nip into the training room and do the test paper." What? In the training room, with drawers full of copies of the Highway Code? Good job I'm honest.

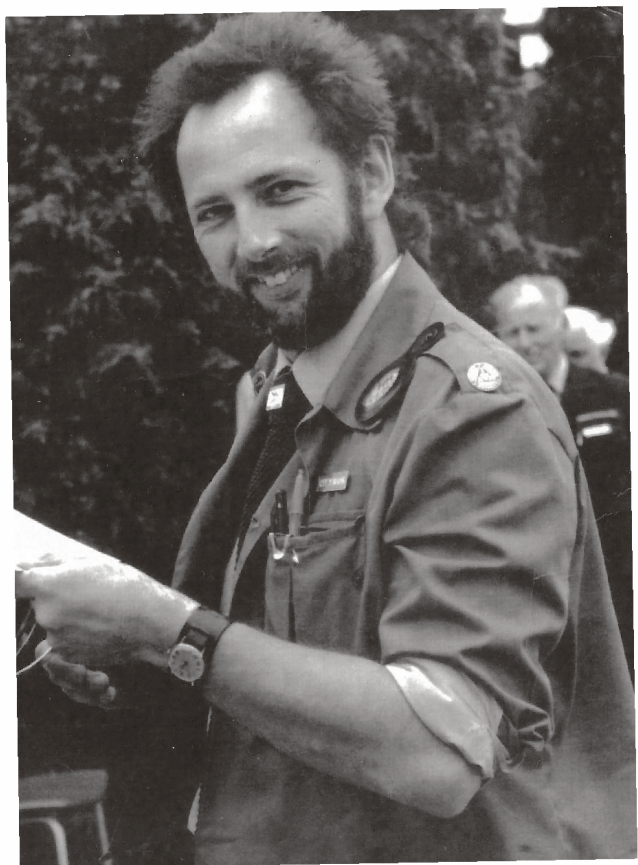
Honest! The first year we had had an observed run but despite the threat in future years, I doubt if this actually happened, it was certainly never mentioned in the results. This did not stop my paranoia and on one occasion, operating service X14 from Cardiff to Bristol, a man boarded wearing a black anorak and trousers and carrying a clipboard.

This was the one, a theory confirmed when he sat on the front nearside seat of the Van Hool-bodied Volvo coach, the perfect place to observe my driving. Needless to say, all the passengers had the smoothest, most careful and by-the-book journey of their lives – until he got off and I reverted to the 'hell-for-leather' norm. I doubt very much whether he was my Nemesis; nothing was mentioned in any subsequent part of the heat, but you can't be too careful.

The period between entering the heat and the heat itself was fraught. Not only did I have to stay accident-free, but I had to swot up on every aspect of PSV law and driving knowledge. Books and newspapers went unread and soap operas unwatched, as I stuck my head in the Highway Code, Theory Test, drivers' hours regulations and any other relevant publication I could find, which might add to my knowledge and from which the devilish examiner might lift a question.

Mnemonics and acronyms were invented in an effort to remember stopping distances or hours of work and rest as well as, for example, the types of animal one has to report if one is in a collision. (Don't ask me now, for goodness' sake, but there once was such a question.) The period between the heat and the final was equally – perhaps more – stressful, as any accident in this period would mean disqualification.

I was driving to Clevedon one year, having won the heat, when there was a loud 'bang'. My



**Above:** Bill is seen here receiving the award as Runner-up in the Bristol heat of the 1985 Bus Driver of the Year competition.



first thought was that I had hit something and was not going to Blackpool. Reason returned, to the extent that I realised there were no other vehicles about, but I was sure I must have hit a roadside rock.

On arrival at the Clevedon terminus I tentatively climbed from the cab, fearing the worst. As I left the cab I noticed the litter bin, attached to the cab door, hanging down and the floor covered in tickets. I breathed a sigh of relief; the top-fastening bin had come loose and swung down, hitting the cab door in so doing. Oh joy! I didn't even mind picking up all the tickets.

Talking of the heats, it was interesting on reaching Blackpool to hear of other drivers' experiences. Some companies ran almost 'mini finals', to decide their entrants whilst others did little but ask some long-serving driver if he fancied having a go in Blackpool. First Somerset and Avon fell somewhere between these extremes, but it has to be said that whilst publicity for the competition was widespread there was little response from the driving staff.

I could not understand this, because there were cash prizes for the winners of the heat, as well as an 'expenses paid' trip to Blackpool and possible further cash to be won as well as a modicum of glory – all of this with little to lose but some study and a few months of careful driving.

Nevertheless it seemed that each year there was a small group of us regulars in the heat and when the company announced that it would send three drivers to Blackpool in view of the size and geographical spread of the company's operations, it was almost taken as read that we 'three musketeers' would attend. This takes nothing away from my colleagues who were quite capable of beating off any competitors; I was less sanguine about my own efforts in that regard.

## Blackpool here we come

And so to Blackpool, that gem on the Lancashire coast and, to a Mancunian like me, almost home.

The competition was to take place over the first weekend in September with a dinner on the Saturday evening and the event itself on the Sunday. It was based in the Hilton Hotel on the resort's North Shore; as I have stated before, no back-street B & B for these boys, and we were accommodated in the hotel. As well as the drivers and their partners came the companies' driving examiners and their wives and the operations managers of the entrants' depots and their partners plus the Regional Directors and spouses.

This entourage all had to be paid for and, as I have said earlier, I am most grateful to First for their generosity in providing this weekend.



**Above:** The bus in which Bill part in the driving tests in the Bus Driver of the Year final in Blackpool. This does not show another change of job, as entrants were not allowed to drive a vehicle belonging to their employer, so he's in a Burnley & Pendle Wright-bodied Volvo B10BLE single-decker. (Alan Willoughby)

I know we drivers had to sweat a bit on the Sunday, but the whole experience was most enjoyable and did not come cheap as far as the company was concerned.

The Saturday evening dinner was a convivial affair, but then came the briefing for the entrants. This is when the serious part started to make itself felt and I realised that this was

the test route and encouraged to familiarise ourselves with the layout and the route. We were also told that we should spend a little time checking our allocated vehicle before the tests. No more was said on this cryptic note.

The Sunday would be divided into two parts, with some drivers completing the test paper in the hotel, while others did the driving tests,

and then swapping places. The test paper sessions were block sessions at intervals, but the timings for the driving tests on the

Lower Promenade, which had been cordoned off and turned into the 'bus station' for the Middle Walk Bus Company, were set at three minute intervals and you were told to report at your allotted time complete with driving licence and in full uniform. Failure on any of these points would result in disqualification.

Well, I was by now a bag of nerves as the thought of what was to come started to hit home and the authoritarian manner of the organisers' strictures sank in. What had

THIS ENTOURAGE ALL HAD TO BE PAID FOR AND, AS I HAVE SAID EARLIER, I AM MOST GRATEFUL TO FIRST FOR THEIR GENEROSITY IN PROVIDING THIS WEEKEND.

no mere 'jolly', but I had to justify my presence. The organisers of the competition are persons connected with the bus and coach industry in some capacity and do a great job in running the weekend. I'm not brown-nosing, I've retired and don't enter any more!

We were told that for the purposes of the tests we were to become employees of the fictional Middle Walk Bus Company and we must adhere to its rules. We were taken through a classroom talk on the various manoeuvring tests and





**Above:** The Badgerline Group was one of the first to show support for one of Britain's first fully-low-floor single-deckers, the Lance SLF (Super Low Floor). When new, fleet no 139 (M139 FAE) demonstrated to Bristol Omnibus Company (City Line) and here the Wright 'Pathfinder 320'-bodied bus is seen at Cribbs Causeway. It looks quite similar to Bill's BDOY test bus.

I let myself in for? Sleep was a hard-found commodity that night but, the following morning, on the basis of the condemned man eating a hearty breakfast, I managed to avail myself of the excellent fare provided by the Hilton. Well, it would be churlish not to.

I was slated to do the question paper first and duly reported to the room set aside for that purpose in the hotel. Waiting outside, I chatted to another driver who was chain smoking (you could then) and giving a good impression of someone on the verge of a fit. He had entered the previous year, had not acquitted himself well and was dreading the prospect of a repeat performance.

Watching this gibbering being rather calmed me

down; I mean, it was only a competition and hardly worth getting in that state. It was not as if your job hung on it, and only your own self-esteem took a beating, if you failed to achieve your hoped for placing. Emboldened, therefore, I entered the hall to undertake the test paper. The format was to show slides of traffic signs or situations and we candidates would put our answers on the test paper. There was a mix of Highway Code, theory test and mechanical knowledge questions with usually multiple-choice answers.

I was sceptical about the inclusion of mechanical knowledge questions, as we drivers were not encouraged to delve into the vehicle's innards and, certainly in my case, the answers to most questions were 'pot luck'. In later years, the questions tended more towards the dashboard controls and their meanings, which was far more relevant. Over the five years that I undertook

this test paper, some slides were repeated, but this was of no particular help if you were not sure of the answer the first time, as the correct answer was not given nor did you know which questions you had correct.

So, theory paper completed and sweaty palms dried, it was off down the promenade to the 'bus station' for the driving test. On reporting to the 'Traffic Office' we were booked on and told to await the marshals' instructions. Several companies local to Blackpool had brought vehicles for use by the entrants and it had been decreed that we should not drive a vehicle

## I WAS SCEPTICAL ABOUT THE INCLUSION OF MECHANICAL KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS, AS WE DRIVERS WERE NOT ENCOURAGED TO DELVE INTO THE VEHICLE'S INNARDS

owned by our employing company or group; pointless really as I had to forego First vehicles of a type not used in Bristol and ended up with a Volvo B10BLE of Burnley and Pendle identical to those I drove regularly in Bristol, but never mind.

The exercises consisted of driving into a marked 'bay', to simulate a parking bay, to stop as near to the nearside and front white lines as possible. The driving examiner tried to stiffen my ebbing confidence: "Just like driving into the bus station bay" he said. Well yes, except that as one approached the transverse white line it disappeared from view, unlike the barrier in a station which gave you something to aim for (well, not literally).

Off then, up the slope, to stop with the rear end of the bus in a marked area, with more points awarded the further outside the green area you stopped. I might mention that the name of the game in the BDOY competition

was to achieve a 'pointless' score, as points were only given as penalties. Unlike with Uncle Brucie, points definitely did not make prizes!

The next exercise was passing through a chicane of cones, obviously aiming not to make any contact, and then up onto the Promenade. This was the public highway and a Blackpool Transport bus route but the organisers had sited two of their own 'bus stops', which we had to observe with marshals measuring our stopping distance from the kerb and from flag to vehicle front.

Then there was a right turn off the Promenade followed by a left down to a roundabout with a left followed by a right to pass over the tram lines and the footpath to regain the lower promenade. This was a complicated manoeuvre, with a tram stop prior to the turn off the road; you just hoped no tram was in the vicinity, as it would be debatable whether to assume the tram would stop or if you proceeded and had to wait for it you would then block the oncoming traffic. Oh, the stress of it all!

Back on the lower promenade, we were confronted by a minimum and a maximum speed limit sign, both set at 15mph. So that's why half the speedo was blacked out – I did wonder. The aim was obviously to drive at or as near to 15mph as we could estimate, with a speed gun being pointed at us. After this came a mystery exercise. Sometimes there was an extra bus stop but one year those ..... nice BDOY people had fashioned a 'fuel pump' and you had to stop with the vehicle's fuel filler as near to the 'pump' as possible. Woe betide you if you had ignored the organisers' advice and not inspected your vehicle before take-off. Bit late then to try

to work out which side the filler was.

Along the lower promenade to rejoin the main Promenade at which point a 'Stop'

sign had been erected. Lurking behind the wall, was an observer, waiting to see whether you applied the handbrake as required. Oh, the cunning of these people!

All that was left then was to return via a right turn off the Promenade to the 'bus station' and leave your bus for the next victim. I have mentioned in an earlier article how on one occasion an over-zealous competitor jumped in my bus eager to get himself ready and I was censured by Authority for leaving my cab before I had been instructed to do so. See what I mean about the whole thing creating an air of fear and trembling?

The competition content completed, I could breathe again and pass the time until mid-afternoon, when we were due to assemble in the hotel to hear the results. This was a period of reflection on what had just occurred and perhaps an exchange of experiences with one's



fellow entrants. The most depressing aspect of this period was finding out from your colleagues that your 'correct' answers to some of the questions might not have been as 'correct' as you thought, but nothing could be done and you had to be philosophical, if that is how "Ah well, .....s to it!" can be so classified.

On returning to the hotel we were given a pack of 'goodies' by the BDOY organisers. There was usually an inscribed pen in a case and variously a branded hold-all or a stainless steel flask. There was also – a nice touch – a £10 note to cover the cost of the entrant's food for the day. All of this largesse was very much appreciated and provided nice souvenirs of the event, regardless of any success in the competition itself.

The results ceremony began as an exciting journey, growing less so as winners were announced and categories were depleted. Hope was gradually diminishing and it was possible at stages before the final result to realise that 'it was not you'. There was, *inter alia*, a prize for the highest placed First group driver; now logic told you that if you had not won this then you had not won the overall competition. See, little hints to shatter your dreams.

One year I sat there jacketless, listening to the litany of recipients, when a familiar name was called out. I recognise that name – it's mine! Hell, jacket on quick and up through the serried ranks, to receive the prize for Best Highway Code and Mechanical Knowledge paper from Phillip Green of Virgin trains – what a thrill for him and a boost to his career to have met me!

Back in a daze to my seat clutching a large shield and a miniature, the former to be engraved and retained for 12 months and the latter for my own keeping. Great! I floated back from Blackpool on Cloud 9 as well as the M6; all that swotting and memorising had come good and I felt that I had justified the company's backing.

Apart from this one occasion, I came nowhere



**Above:** An older Bristol RE of Badgerline, fleet no MH 1260, DAO293K, ex-Bristol Omnibus Company, on a Bristol City council-supported route in urban Bristol, but run under contract by the supposed country operator. (K Amos)

in the prizes, but I was usually within the Top 20 and, as the Chairman of the BDOY had pointed out in his remarks, each of the 120 or so finalists was already a winner out of the thousands of drivers across the country, which was a nice comment and brought some consolation at your time of disappointment.

After the results ceremony, one collected a paper showing everyone's overall performances. This is not comfortable reading for those well down the list, but someone has to come last and take heart from the chairman's statement. One's points in each category are listed and I always thought it must be frustrating – not having been in that position myself – to come in second place overall by a narrow margin and go through the categories thinking "If I'd just got one more question right..." or "If I'd not clipped that cone....."

One category was 'passenger comfort', which was measured using a container of water inside the saloon. In my first year, I was about to set off, when a marshal jumped aboard and said: "Hang on driver, I'm just going to check the water." Such was my state of tension at the

time, that it was not until some time later that it occurred to me that it was unusual to check the water level inside the vehicle. It then dawned on me that he was checking the level in the 'comfort' container.

I collected some points in this category on one occasion, which surprised me because I was always careful to drive as smoothly as conditions allowed, but then I remembered; there was a hold-up when I was given my allocated vehicle because an earlier competitor had raised an objection to some aspect and the stewards had to make a check. When I was eventually allowed to start I did the manoeuvring tests and went onto the Promenade.

I stopped at the first 'bus stop', but it seemed to me that I would have to leave the Promenade before I reached the second stop. My immediate muddled thought was that, because of the delay, they had done away with the second stop to save time and I was just analysing this thought when I spotted the stop. I involuntarily pressed the throttle and the automatic gearbox 'kicked', hence a spillage of water and an 'uncomfortable' ride! By such margins are competitions won or lost – but not in my case.

That, then, is my experience of the Bus Driver of the Year Competition. An altogether worthwhile event and one I would encourage all operating companies to support and all eligible drivers to enter. It is the one time when you can show to yourself, your colleagues and the general public that bus driving is a skilful occupation and put to rest some of the misconceptions about the industry.

If for no other reason, it is a (mostly) enjoyable weekend and there is always the chance of hard cash as well as glory. What more incentive do you need? I am more than grateful to have had the opportunity to enter the competition on a number of occasions and I commend the organisers for their commitment and skill in running the event. They certainly terrified me on my first appearance – and even in later years – but they do a superb job.



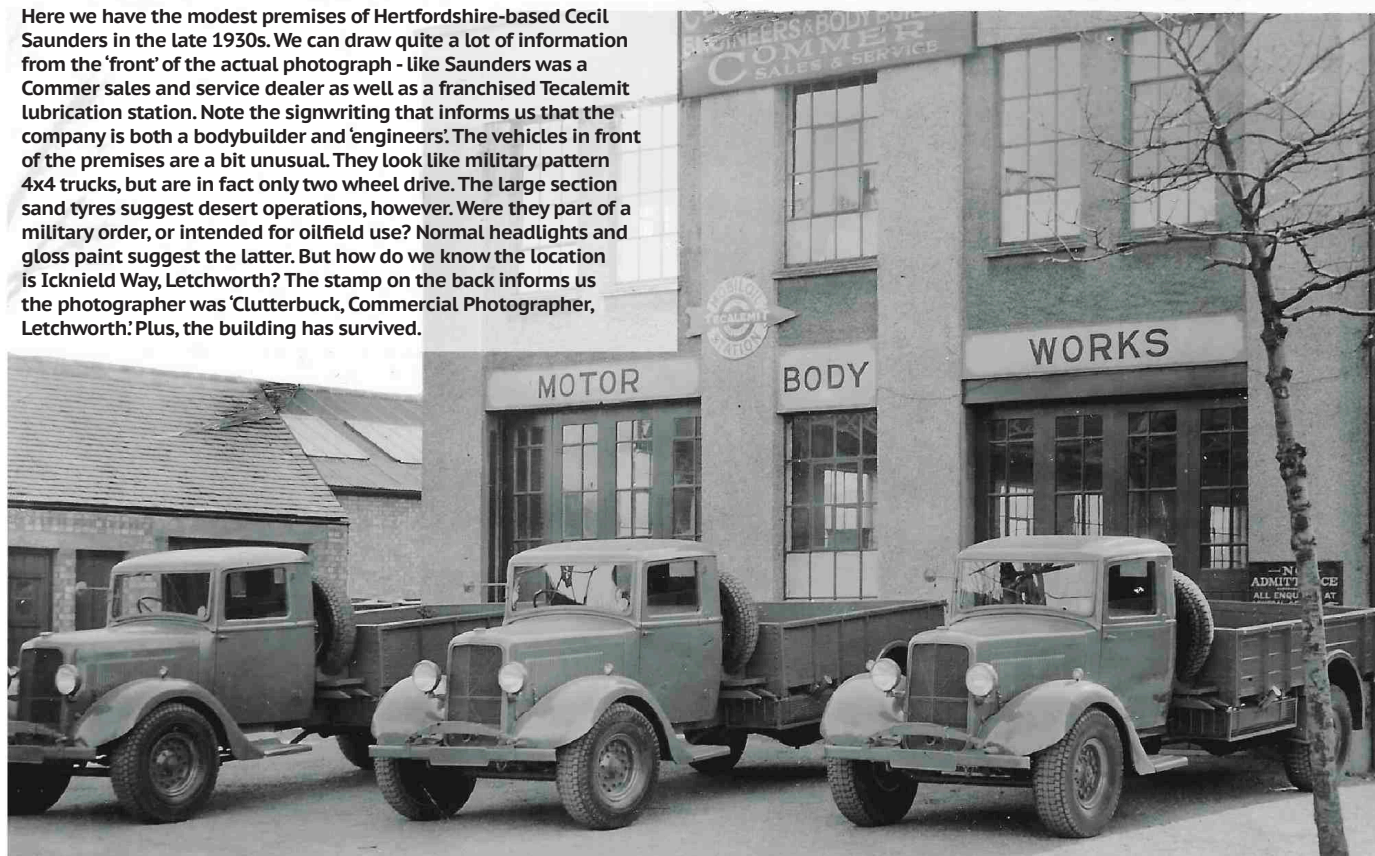
**Above:** Another Bristol City Line service using REs until late in their career was the 10. Here, in September 1985, 1326 (OHU 34M), roars into Leinster Avenue on its final stretch to one of the large south Bristol housing estates, when bill was driving for that company.



# IF I SAID YOU HAD A BEAUTIFUL BODY...

## PART TWO

Here we have the modest premises of Hertfordshire-based Cecil Saunders in the late 1930s. We can draw quite a lot of information from the 'front' of the actual photograph - like Saunders was a Commer sales and service dealer as well as a franchised Tecalemit lubrication station. Note the signwriting that informs us that the company is both a bodybuilder and 'engineers'. The vehicles in front of the premises are a bit unusual. They look like military pattern 4x4 trucks, but are in fact only two wheel drive. The large section sand tyres suggest desert operations, however. Were they part of a military order, or intended for oilfield use? Normal headlights and gloss paint suggest the latter. But how do we know the location is Icknield Way, Letchworth? The stamp on the back informs us the photographer was 'Clutterbuck, Commercial Photographer, Letchworth'. Plus, the building has survived.



Last June, our **Malcolm** took a look at the way the commercial bodybuilding evolved from the horse-drawn era, when there would have been a locally based business in just about every market town, into an industry of national, or even international stature. His point? That we, as enthusiasts, might be spending so much time looking at the badge on the front of the cab, we're missing out on the interesting bit on the back – the bodywork. This time, he suggests we should also pay more attention to the actual load and where it's going.

**T**he starting point of any good argument tends to centre around 'contrast'. One side might see things in one way, while the other sees things entirely differently.

Examples? Take your pick. There are loads relating to religion, politics and more recently the smoking of cigarettes, 'elf and safety' issues and what can be said in public without resulting in a charge of verbal abuse.

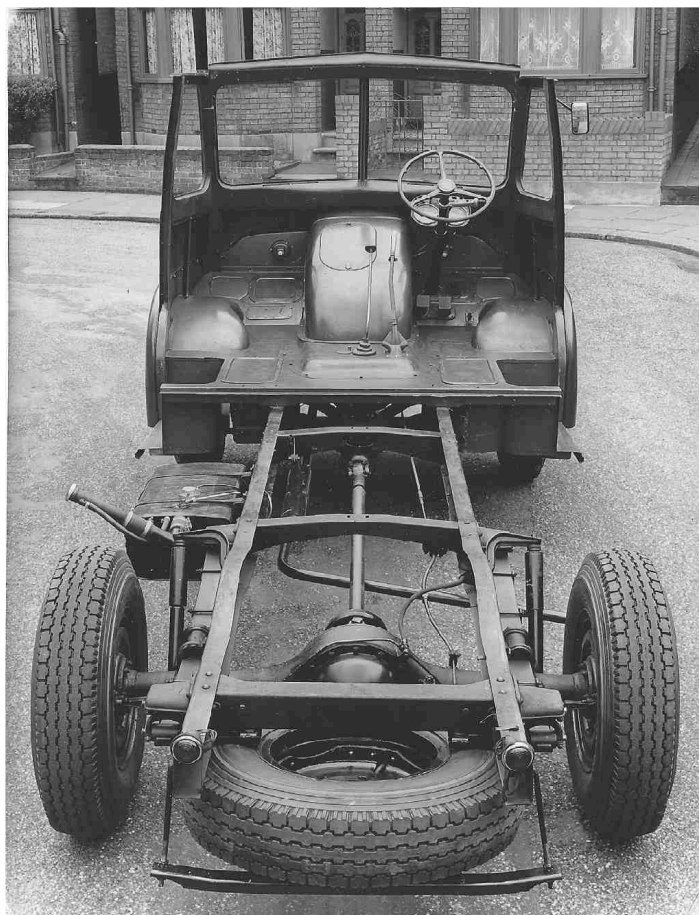
Whether we like it or not, our society is constantly changing, so if our interest lies in 'history' – in the context of 'the vintage roadscene' – surely we should try to take into account the wider social backdrop of the time? To put things in context, in other words.

Clearly, many things have got better over the years – central heating is probably my favourite example. As a youngster, if I wanted to absorb myself in transport history, it



**Above:** Today, most panel vans are built and delivered direct from the manufacturer's production line - from outside the UK since the demise of LDV and the decamping of Ford from Southampton to Turkey. But why, when Austin took the unusual step of marketing a complete factory-built 'Three-Way' panel van, might customer's want to buy a chassis/scuttle then get a local bodybuilder to complete the job? Unusually, HBT 449 has already been registered before painting, allowing us to note the aluminium panelling undertaken - in this case by Massey Coachbuilders of Market Weighton, Lincs.





**Above:** Here's a more ambitious example of the bodybuilders art, a high roof conversion on a Jowett 'Bradford' chassis/scuttle utilising the 'factory' cab doors. There's plenty of social history contained in this picture – the shortage of new vehicles in the 'export and die' years probably meant only the least-attractive options were available here! Or are we being unfair to Jowett? Maybe the new owner 'H St Paul' was canny enough to realise comfortable, high speed travel over vast distances were not a prerequisite for a van that earned its corn by being stationary on the seafront at 'Skeggy'?

**Left:** What the bodybuilder had to work with - not a lot! This is the prototype Commer BF or 'Express' delivery van - modelled as a van by Lesney and an ice cream van by Corgi. The bodybuilding trade depended on such 'chassis/scuttle' options in the early post-war era for survival. It would be quite normal for such units to be delivered with the driver sitting on a wooden crate, in place of a proper seat. The information on the back of the photo confirms this is a manufacturer's photo of what was originally known as a '25cwt FC Mk IV'.

involved leaving a warm fireside (coal) in the 'living room' (the 'front room' being only available for Christmas or when posh visitors came round) and climbing the stairs up to my freezing cold bedroom to look through my collection of lorry sales brochures, old magazines and black and white photos. The only source of heat was a single bar electric fire, which, if I was lucky, would just melt the ice on the inside of the window before it was time to change into my jim-jams for bed!

Today? Even though we're still all caught-up in a recession – "We're all in it together", remember? – younger generations see it as essential to have the central heating turned up so high, it's possible to walk around the house in winter wearing just a teeshirt. But if we're looking for more contrasts, it's that with everything being digitised and instantly available at the prod of a mouse, we run the risk of losing the details behind the image – literally. Like the press photos of the past tended to have a paper slip stuck on the back containing the date, location and subject matter. Images on a DVD don't.

## THE SCENE OF SOCIAL CHANGE

You're thinking that on the face of it perhaps, aside from 'technology', our values, priorities and lives have changed very little? Look closer; the almost universal application of central heating has resulted in massive changes to our country's transport infrastructure. Back in the 1950s, while my

(cold) nose was buried in 'borrowed' copies of transport industry-related magazines, the transport of coal was one of the most important aspects of both road and rail transport. That's both 'in bulk' from coal mine to distributor. And locally, from the railway sidings like those at West Malling station, for local household distribution.

To me, Bobby Anscombe's grubby BMC coal lorry was as much a part of 'the vintage

roadscene' as the postman's bike, the CA Bedford operated by the milkman, the 'International Stores' Fordson E83W grocery delivery van, or the arrival at my dad's factory of the green normal control Austin of 'Carter Paterson' (even though it was really BRS Parcels by then, nobody referred to it as such), or the maroon and cream Thames 'Costcutter' of British Railways. The other key part of that roadscene? A Maidstone & District bus every



**Above:** Here's another example of Massey Coachbuilders work. Like Austin, Morris and Bedford, 'Ford of Britain' (as we naively thought of it at the time) already produced complete factory-built panel vans which could be purchased through their respective dealer networks. So why did 'A Sutcliffe' – trading as Hudsons Luxury Coaches – purchase a 10cwt Fordson E83W chassis/scuttle and commission a coachbuilt van body from Massey? Closer examination reveals four or five inches of added headroom over the standard panel van and stylish curved rear doors – odd that as the rear doors were the only flat panels on the factory-built van!





**Above:** The nationalisation of road transport services and – of course, railway and power utility-owned road vehicles – must have had a significant factor on the failure rate of smaller local vehicle bodybuilders. Especially as B and C licence fleets were also restricted by the shortage of new chassis. To make matters worse, the British Transport Commission ended up owning its own bodybuilders. Here is a brand new AEC Mammoth Major with stylishly skirted van body built by Star Bodies (BTC) of Water Street, Manchester, but destined for the Central Bristol Group. Oddly, the official photograph has been subjected to some 'airbrushing' – an offside door in the body has been (almost) removed. But why?



**Above:** Here's another van body built for a then recently nationalised undertaking, British Transport Hotels, the organisation charged with taking over the former railway-owned facilities. 'Centralisation' is clearly the name of the game here. This Commer 'Gamecock' (as modelled by Corgi as that mobile radar unit and Lesney as a humble bin-wagon) is to be used to collect dirty laundry and take it to the State-owned Willesden Laundry. We know that the body was... "specially designed to carry 54 large (wickerwork) hampers of laundry", but oddly that it was built not by BTC-owned Star Bodies, but by a bodybuilder called Manhire and Chandler. We also know from the press release info on the back, that the Commer was petrol-engined – so as not to wake residents at the hotels, perhaps?

twenty minutes. Today? There's one every other day!

The only 'heavies' I saw on a daily basis, belonged to the in-house (Oops, a social change-related anachronism, there – I mean 'C-Licence') fleet operated by Xzit GB Limited (where my dad worked), or Goldwells – referred to locally as 'The Cider Works'. These carried vast quantities of rather sickly drinks such as 'Baby Bubbly', 'Pink Lady' and 'Snowball' – all of which I understood to be the sort of stuff that sophisticated women used to drink, while menfolk drank beer.

Leaving aside yet another example of how social values have changed over the years (sexism), my point is, of all the vehicles I remember from that time, I could probably recite the make and model of the chassis, but when it comes to describing the body – and the load it was specified to carry – things get much more difficult. More difficult, because unlike more well-off boys like Peter Davis or Arthur Ingram, I was never able to afford a camera, or the film, during my youth, so there is no first-hand visual record of what I saw. Another contrast with today then, now that every kid on the block has a mobile phone with a camera.

## THE BACK STORY

Thankfully, the transport magazines of the period, like 'The Commercial Motor' have survived well – but look out for 'Motor Transport' and even rarer 'Modern Transport' and 'Motor Commerce' of the 1950s. But note that they don't tend to carry anywhere near as much information about the maker of the body, as they do on the chassis, the engine, or the supplying dealer. It wasn't until many years later, when I started work as a transport industry magazine editor that I realised the reason why. Bodybuilders tended to be pretty useless at marketing their products, in terms of taking press photographs and issuing press releases. Equally, at least until companies like

Boalloy introduced the 'Tautliner', they didn't tend to spend much money on advertising, either. The end result? Journalists have to work to strict deadlines and, as a result, have to use the material that is most readily available, most of which tends to come from the chassis manufacturers.

But you could argue that the bodywork – and what is carried on it – is just as interesting as whether the chassis was erected by AEC in Southall, Middlesex, or Leyland in... well, Leyland, Lancashire, or wherever. Sadly, a large chunk of that history has already been lost. Many of the local bodybuilding companies we were talking about earlier have long since either gone out of business – often as

**Right:** Staying with Rootes Group products, here we have a real period piece, the Karrier Bantam mobile shop – immortalised by the Smiths unit modelled by Corgi Toys – which was fitted out as a mobile showroom for the North West Gas Board. That would have been smelly 'coal gas' of course, not your North Sea variety.







new generations have sold-out for a fast buck – or the original town centre premises have been lost during World War II, or the 1960s orgy of inner ring road destruction and ‘development’. But...

It’s not too late yet. You may find that the photographic archive of your nearest local commercial vehicle bodybuilder has been digitised and is available from your local library service. Or even your local newspaper – if that’s been lucky enough to survive, that is. Getting the images of times past is one thing however. Finding out about the details of what, who, where and why is much more challenging.

**Above:** It’s also a gas! Here we see another excellent example of the bodybuilder’s art, a mobile shop, although in this case, it’s as a mobile showroom for gas cookers and boilers. We know from the details of this official photograph that the shop semi-trailer body was built by S M Bond of Manchester, using hardwood and aluminium. It’s 25 feet long by 7 feet 6 inches wide and has an unladen weight of 5 tons 8 cwt – which must have made that little petrol-engined Bantam tractor unit grunt a bit! It was photographed on the second of November 1953. The key social point? In those days, mobile shops came to the new housing developments, as few housewives had their own transport.

**Middle left:** Not all bodybuilders managed to produce a good looking end-result! Especially as here, when the chassis manufacturer’s radiator wasn’t utilised. Why this Seddon-based ‘Perkins Diesel Mobile Fitter’s Instruction School’ looks so ugly, when most standard Seddon products looked so handsome, is hard to tie down, but the lack of side swage lines or ‘streamlining’, the old-fashioned curve to the front screen lower edge and lack of trendy signwriting is a start. But the killer has to be those ugly mouldings around the headlights!

**Bottom left:** Here’s a better looking Seddon. Halls of Finchley, located on ‘Odeon Parade, N12’, was one of Seddon’s more professional dealerships, so naturally used a Seddon chassis as the basis of this rather neat mobile spares unit. Sadly, we don’t know the name of the bodybuilder – was it Halls themselves? – but wisely whoever designed it kept the good looking Seddon cab while building on a streamlined body with walk-in side access door.





**Above:** Another Seddon chassis and another style of body. We've had bespoke panel vans on chassis/scuttles, merging of factory cab into bodywork and all-enveloping styles. Here's a really tough style to get right, the integral high capacity van, in this case for removals. The business of Herbert Davis was located in Gloucester, but this photo must have been taken prior to delivery by Seddon – although the location looks more 'bodybuilder' than chassis manufacturer. But the most interesting bit? The way in which the front screen and doors have been merged into a high-roof pantech body with skirted sides. Not perfect, but not bad.

**Below:** A reminder that, in many cases, the commercial vehicle bodybuilder was not only responsible for designing and making the body on the chassis, but the cab as well. As here on this AEC. This four-axle insulated van – note the rooftop ventilators, so it's not a fridge van – seems an unlikely choice to carry sausages. At least until we consider the weight of the insulated bodywork. The cab features deep, wrap-around screens which are modern enough, but are not as stylish as contemporary Fodens or ERFs, surely?

## VAN BODIES BY



1764 - 1964

**J. H. JENNINGS & SON LTD.**  
SANDBACH, CHESHIRE

Telephone: Sandbach 262



**Above and right:** By 1964, the future of small local bodybuilders was under serious threat - and it was about to get a lot more difficult. Here, Jennings of Sandbach was celebrating 'Two Centuries of Craftsmanship' with a pretty cheap and nasty black, white and spot colour green six page fold-out brochure. The front cover design couldn't decide between ancient (the wreath) and modern (the flash), but inside we find several stylish van bodies, ranging from a van based on a Bedford 25cwt chassis (also then about to become history), a Luton-head pantech body on a Morris FHK, utilising a GRP roof section and a couple of nice integral vans built on an ERF LKG44 chassis, for Oldham Batteries, and a Dennis Pax 7-tonner for Roy Trevor.



**VB 1**  
This confectionery van on a Bedford 25-cwt, normal control chassis of 6' 11" wheelbase is of composite construction. It has sliding side doors to the confectionery compartment and double doors with a hinge-up canopy at the rear.

**VB 3**  
A Luton van on a Morris FHK 100 chassis and cab, built to carry foam plastic. The capacity of the body is approximately 1,500 cu. ft. The overall length is 30' with 8' 3" interior headroom. The roof is one-piece glass fibre and the floor is of aluminium. At the rear there is a drop-down tailboard with double doors above.



**VB 2**  
The basis of this streamlined van is an ERF LKG44 chassis. The body, of composite construction, has 6' 6" headroom. It is 10' long and 7' 6" wide. The interior is fitted out as a mobile store vehicle. A two-foot wide panel of translucent glass fibre gives light to the interior.

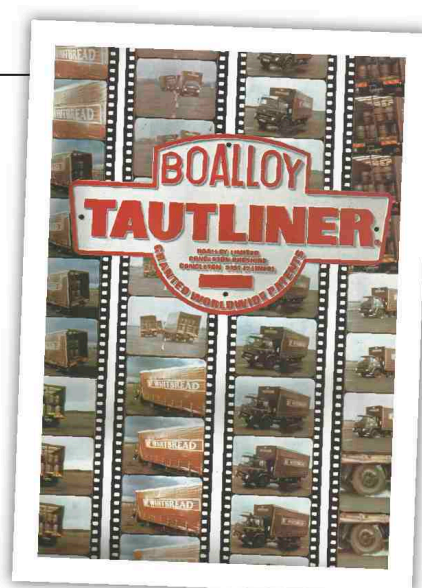
**VB 4**  
Built for Roy Trevor Removals, a streamlined integral Luton van on a Dennis Pax 7-ton chassis of 17' 6" wheelbase. The interior length is 23' 6" by 7' 6" wide and 8' 3" high. Its capacity is 1,420 cu. ft. Of composite construction, the van has a one-piece fibreglass roof. At the rear there are both roller shutters and a drop-down tailboard.



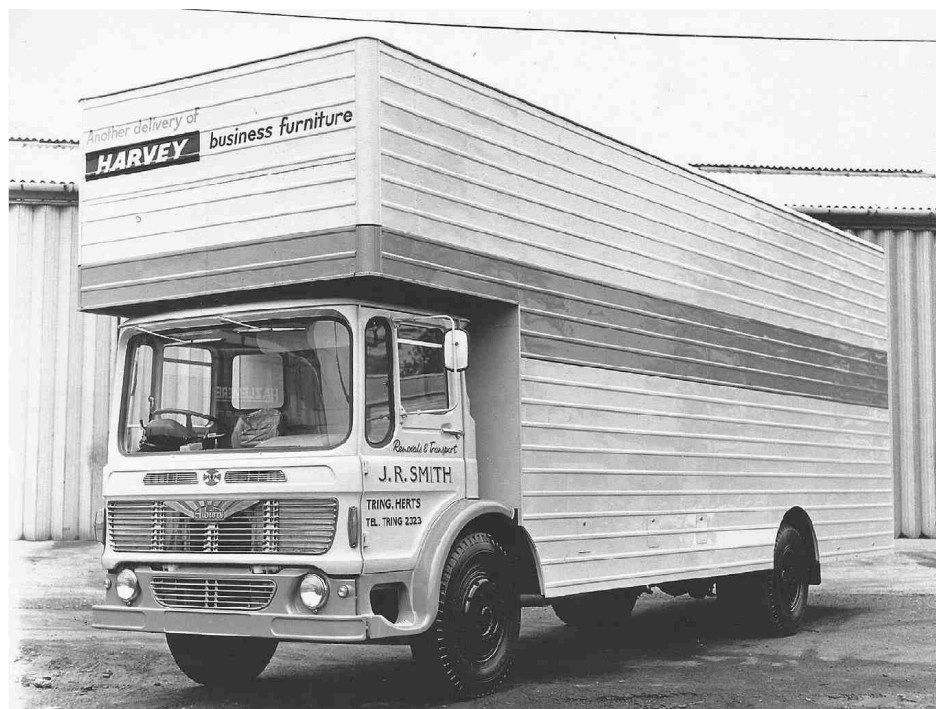




**Above:** Sometimes even a simple lorry body can be beautiful – and have a history. What better example could we find than the classic Dinky Toys Leyland Comet Blue Circle cement lorry? The cobbled streets and scaffolding remind us that the side-effects of wartime bombing still had to be put right, yet here in number 714, we have an example of Leyland Motors 'World Truck' with stylish 'tin-front', designed to appeal to potential customers in Canada, South America and, indeed, anywhere else with Dollars to spend. But the body? That stylish skirted design was built by Bonallack & Sons and replicated in every boy's toy cupboard across the land. Interestingly, skirted bodies only tended to be specified by brewers, paper mills (like Bowaters and Reed) and cement companies (Tunnel Cement also had them).



**Above:** By the 1970s, the British commercial vehicle bodybuilder market had been forced to change from meeting 'local' requirements to trying to establish a national identity known (hopefully) for a specialist niche product line. Perhaps the most successful example of this transition was that of Boalloy of Congleton, Cheshire. Moving from general bodybuilder to specialist lorry cab manufacturer to the introduction of the 'Tautliner', enabled the company to weather various storms that hit the CV industry – but the timing of the Tautliner was perfect, with the whole idea of easy side access for palletised goods, relating to the changes in retail distribution – which had changed from hand-balling in the high street to large out-of-town supermarkets.



**Above:** The change over to tilt cabs caused major upheavals for commercial vehicle bodybuilders and, aside from horseboxes, pretty much rang the death knell for all-enveloping 'integral' van bodywork. Here is an official press release photograph from a London-based bodybuilder showing the only solution, a tilting cab with a removable panel in the Luton head. The use of so much heavy 'ribbing' on the bodysides is hard to explain – other than it could be to stiffen the structure. The cargo to be carried has an interesting, if obscure, connection to our Malcolm; Tring-based J R Smith was a transport contractor used to deliver 'Harvey Business Furniture', which was made by a division of the Butterfield Harvey Group, based in Charlton, and Shelvoke & Drewry was part of the same group. There's also an Albion connection too; our Malcolm did his HGV training behind the wheel of an Ergo-cabbed Albion artic tractor unit and Hands low loader trailer operated by Shelvoke and Drewry!

**Right:** A final reminder of how things have changed in road transport and distribution. Today, crisps are delivered to supermarkets on pallets, by 40-foot curtain-siders, and all the unwanted packaging is 'recycled'. Smaller 'convenience' store owners have to travel to the nearest cash and carry. Back in the 1960s – and indeed since motor transport had taken over from the railway-owned horse and cart – Smiths Crisps were dispatched, first in metal tins, then cardboard boxes which would have to be 'hand-balled' at each drop. The aim of the bodybuilder here is to design the body around the boxes – nine high and nine deep. There was clearly no brief to include space for any mechanical handling. This body is based on a York semi-trailer but, just a couple of generations earlier, the typical urban distribution vehicle could well have been an Albion or Thornycroft 4-tonner, with a van body containing a second compartment – or roof rack – for 'empties'.

The bottom line? Thankfully, many of us can still remember some details, the depot locations, the loads and, even more important, the colours of vehicles that were once part of 'the vintage roadscene'. But as we start another New Year, let's make a resolution to share as much of that information with others as we can, eh?

While we can still remember it!

Do you have any memories of your favourite vehicles or other elements of 'the vintage roadscene'? If so, why not share them with our readers?

Our Malcolm and Editor Forbes would love to hear from you either by post or e-mail. And if you have any personal photographs, we'd love to borrow them as well.





# Retro Truck Show

## BEFO LUCK 2UOM

We finish our round-up of the 2014 season rallies with photo reports from **Mike Forbes** and **Jim King**.



**Top:** The Astran name will always have a certain draw for enthusiasts and these three artics sporting the company's colours took pride of place at Gaydon, a Scania 143 and a 141 flanking a Volvo FH12, with older F88s of Swains of Stretton and Carpenter alongside.

**Left:** Maybe this is what it's all about. A young enthusiast joins us in photographing parts of a Volvo F89, while others check out the interior.

**Below:** A nicely restored Scania 141 from Belgium alongside some more recent stablemates.

It's not often that we use the 'T' word in Vintage Roadscene, but Mike Forbes was at this show at Gaydon in September, where the emphasis was on more modern classic commercial vehicles.

The Classic Commercial Vehicle Show at Gaydon each June is undoubtedly the biggest show for old commercial vehicles of all types. Alongside what we might call the 'traditional' preserved and restored lorries, there is an increasing number of more recent vehicles, dating from around the 1970s onwards. In general, classic commercial enthusiasts are

interested in all types of lorry, old and not so old, but interest is also growing from younger fans for the heavy commercials, just as for buses, which have only more recently been set aside.

A feature of this year's Retro Show was a significant number of vehicles which had come from Belgium, Holland and Germany in particular. Some appeared just as they had in service, TIR plates to the fore, while others, along with more recent vehicles from both sides of the north Sea, sported all sorts of custom paint jobs – and what a spectacle they made, if not really for these pages.







Below: More Belgian trucks, a Volvo F88 and Scania 143M of Deutrans.



Left: There were some 'golden oldies' at the show, like these two pre-war Dennis lorries, to be found among the Volvos of Howarth Bros of Oldham.



Above: This MAN 20.361 6 x 2 tractor unit, not a type otherwise seen in preservation in the UK, had come all the way from Germany with a powder tanker trailer.



Above: The MAN was not the only vehicle from Germany, being lined up with three Volvo F10/12s and a Scania 141.



Above left: What a great way to finish a restored ERF B Series tractor unit, in the manufacturer's 'Trailblazers' promotional/demonstration livery.

Above right: Some of the last Bedford J Types were used by the AA Relay service back in the 1970s. Unfortunately, most people will not retain fond memories of travelling in one of these, their own car having broken down.

Left: This rather nice Ford D Series has made a welcome sight at a number of rallies during 2014.





# Vintage Rally & Steam Fayre



**K**ettering Vintage Rally & Steam Fayre has been running for a number of years now and gained a good reputation for an interesting selection of vehicles. Last September, Mike Forbes found this was well-earned.

Held just off the A14 at Cranford, there were plenty of interesting commercial vehicles of all types at this rally, along with all the other usual attractions.



**Top:** The late David Hayward would have been writing about 'Hell Drivers' if he saw this picture of four 'Parrot-nose' Dodge 100 Series tippers, two from the Glennon fleet, one from the Bartlett fleet and one in Turners of Soham livery, complete with beet rails.

**Above:** This lovely little Bedford WT three-way tipper was showing off its load of road repair tools and signs.

**Left:** A Plaxton Embassy-bodied Bedford J2 mini-bus, which was seen at the Bus Festival at Gaydon in August, as well as at the Kettering rally.







**Left and below:** This Volvo F88, with its Scheuerle low-loader trailer, carrying a John Deere-Lanz crawler tractor had a rather Continental appearance, despite having always worked in the UK.



**Left:** A Ford Model 'T' in military guise, in keeping with the World War I Centenary theme running at many rallies and events during 2014.



**Above:** A great line-up of British 'heavy metal', with three Atkinsons, two 'Black Knight' eight-wheelers flank a Borderer, and an ERF B Series tractor units.



**Above:** An ex-military Scammell Crusader recovery vehicle, which looks tough enough to take any big job given to it.



**Above:** The restoration of this 1920s Bean light lorry looked to be nearly finished, although it was sitting on a trailer.



**Above:** A very smart Bedford CAL van from the early 1960s, complete with that lovely period extra, the sun vizor over the screen.



# Sprat & Winkle Run

## 2019 & MINKIE BMW

*Jim King reports on the 6th HCVS Sprat & Winkle Run, Sevenoaks to Hastings, Sunday 19th October 2014.*



**Left:** The 1949 Bedford K Type of John Stevens, now 805 XUE, seen with other participants, including a 1930s Morris Minor van, at the start of the Sprat & Winkle Run.

**Below left:** The 1960 Ford Thames Trader of Mick Holder of Sevenoaks, 2162 PX, closely followed on the run by another, PPM 927.

**Right:** The 1958 Bedford C Type, 375 TMF, of Alan Lusted of Croydon, Surrey appears very like its big brother, the 'S' Type, until you count the wheel nuts!

**Below:** A great picture, two cattle floats, EYB 72Y, the 1983 Bedford TL860 of Martyn Croft of Brightling, East Sussex, and Richard Croft's 1965 Bedford TK, EAP 159C, look as if they're off to market in the rain.



**T**his is a very cosy intimate end of season rally, consisting of a 54 mile trip from Vestry Road Industrial Estate in Sevenoaks to The Stade Car Park on the East Beach at Hastings, always well-supported by both entrants and spectators alike. The sixth that the London and South East Area of the Historic Commercial Vehicle Society has staged, this year sadly, the event was held under a cloud both literally and metaphorically as the event's founding organiser, Andy Garner, passed away on 1st October, and will be sorely missed by many. This rally was held in memory of Andy and I would like to dedicate this report to his memory and send my sincere condolences to his family and friends.

The half way stop was at Eridge railway station, home of the volunteers of the Spa Valley Railway and with Thomas the Tank engine in residence this made for a perfect setting for the classic vehicles to attend. A steady flow of some 60 plus entrants came and went passing through on their way to Hastings and by the time the last of them left around 12.30 the sun was shining and the temperatures were un-seasonally high.

Those who think the classic movement needs more of the younger element involved should attend this event. The West family from Canterbury were there with three Fodens, David in a 1955 OG, TTV 810, Oliver in a 1952 FG, KHO 130, and Austin in his 1990 4350, H132 MOH. Likewise, Paul Edwards Snr. in his 1988 Scania

112M, E33 HRT, closely followed by his son Paul Junior, in his 1987 Scania 142M, E582 CSS, both travelled up from nearby West Kingsdown. Also, this rally wouldn't be complete without the Clark family with Nobby in his 1971 Leyland Bear, MBP 847J, which held the crown for being the oldest still working lorry in central London, and Harry in the 1954 Fordson ET6, WVS 285.

I was pleased to see the 1949 Bedford K type, 805 XUE, now in the ownership of John Stevens as I last saw it as an auction lot at Donington back in 2009 having arrived here from New Zealand. The lorry of the day for me has to be Michael Lovell's 1946 Bedford O Type, HLW 34, with an engine sound worthy of an audience at the Royal Albert Hall.





**Left:** This 1938 Leyland Lynx, FGP 980, with a tanker body, is in the livery of Allan Lock of Headcorn, Kent.

**Below:** Apart from the unfortunate re-registration, 952 UXN, the nicely-restored 1951 Ford Thames E494C of Paul Bristow of Orpington, Kent, creates an almost timeless scene.



**1:** Barry Gandon's 1962 Morris J4 Bluebird motor caravan, registered SSV 831, one of two similar vehicles on the run.

**2:** WVS 285 The 1954 Fordson ET6 platform lorry, WVS 285, of Harry Clark of Sidcup, Kent, leads Nobby Clark's 1971 Leyland Bear, MBP 847J.

**3:** The 1949 Morris Commercial LC3, JUW 830, in its Post Office Telephones livery, of Diane and Eddie Taylor of Godstone, Surrey, leads the Ford 400E van, MLT 528D, of Greg Shadbolt of Bognor Regis, West Sussex.





# Donington Classic Commercial Show

*Jim King and Mike Forbes went to the 2nd IEM Classic Commercial Show at Donington Park, on Saturday 1st November 2014.*



**Left:** There was a lot of interest in this 1967 Bedford J Type, FMA 161F, as well as Bedford K Type and Leyland FG seen behind, at the Donington Classic Commercial Show auction, but they remained unsold.

**Below left:** Jim's favourite of the day, MDE 804, the 1950 Morris Commercial FV brewery dray of George Wood of Burton-on-Trent.

**Below:** The Scammell Register Display Van, L801 TGO, a 1993 Leyland-DAF 45.130 Turbo was seen among the trade, enthusiasts' and club stands in the hall at Donington.



What are the chances of seeing two together? Both Quest 80 lorries, a tipper and a long-wheelbase chassis-cab, from the fleet of B R Whorton of Shenstone, Staffordshire, were at Donington in November.

**T**his was the second year this event has been held under the banner of the Independent Event Management (IEM), run by Claire and Jason Lunn who offered a warm welcome to one and all.

Like moths to a flame, entrants and enthusiasts began arriving at the venue in glorious sunshine with un-seasonally warm temperatures. This is a smashing event to bring the annual classic rally season to a close, with trade stands and auction lots for a last

opportunity to purchase items needed for winter restoration projects, or just for a cuppa and chin-wag with like-minded owners before retiring to the workshop.

Thimbleby and Shorland of Reading once again commenced the auction at 10.00 am and there was plenty of bidding for the 200 plus lots, although only one of the vehicles offered was sold.

We previously saw the only surviving Quest 80 in the UK, D166 FHA, at Gaydon, built in 1979-80, but not registered until 1983 and owned by

Mr Whorton of Shenstone, Staffordshire. Well, he actually owns two Quest 80s, and his driver Terry Gore took both of them to Donington, the second being WNT 502Y. They were initially built by the Quest Bus Company of West Bromwich for a South African contract and fitted with Mercedes engines but remained in this country.

Jim's personal favourite of the day was George Wood's 1950 Morris Commercial FV, MDE 804, which he drove in from nearby Burton-on-Trent, mainly because he remembers 'a Double Diamond works wonders!'





**Above:** Although in excellent condition, having led a fairly easy life, mainly as a recovery vehicle, this 1976 Leyland Buffalo did not sell in the auction.



**Above:** This nice-looking Bedford KM tractor unit, seen among the exhibits outside the hall, was also at the Kettering rally.



**Above:** Among the oldest vehicles present was this Bedford OY, which has spent its life in Lincolnshire.



**Above:** In contrast, this Bedford OY has been restored in military guise.



**Above:** Along with a couple of pick-ups, the Ford V8 Pilot was on show in the hall.



**Above:** On the HCVS East Anglian area stand were Andy Rust's Ford E83W van and a Bedford TK horse box, which was for sale.



**Above:** The one vehicle which did sell in the auction was this Morris-Commercial one-ton van, which was restored many years ago and seen at many events, like the London to Brighton run.



**Above:** A most unusual sight, a lorry being transported on a farm trailer, rather than the other way round, UBM 692K was a rather sad-looking 1972 Atkinson Borderer.



## W MARSHALL & SONS, HAULAGE CONTRACTORS – MY FAMILY'S LIFE WITH TIPPERS AND DEMOLITION

BY TERRY MARSHALL  
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR AND AVAILABLE FROM MIKE FORBES, THE OLD MARQUIS, LONDON ROAD, WOLLASTON, NORTHANTS NN29 7QP. £8, INCLUDING POSTAGE AND CHARITY DONATION.

Terry Marshall put together a scrapbook, with pictures telling the story of the transport and demolition business started by his father

### W Marshall & Sons HAULAGE CONTRACTORS



My Family's Life with  
Tippers and Demolition

Terry Marshall

over 60 years ago. This was carried on and developed by Terry in more recent years, until the economic situation made him decide to offer his experience and services to other companies, these days as project manager for Keltbray, one of the UK's biggest demolition companies.

This has formed the basis of an interesting book, published by the author, produced with some help from Mike Forbes, editor of Vintage Roadscene, telling the story of Wm Marshall & Sons, with the ups and downs of running tipper lorries and plant. Keeping a company and family going through thick and thin, staying with the business you know best and passing on your knowledge to the next generation are all discussed by somebody who knows what it's all about.

Terry is also a keen model builder and collector and the book shows his excellent models and interesting dioramas of many of the demolition jobs he has been involved with.

Terry is well-known on the classic vehicle scene as a Foden enthusiast and member of the team which looks after the McGovern fleet of preserved vehicles. They take part in the London Irish Vintage Club Charity Run, from Cricklewood to Greenford. The 'Vintage Day' raises funds for the St Luke's Hospice, for Harrow and Brent. For this reason, £1 from the proceeds of the sale of each copy of this book will be donated to the St Luke's Hospice Charity as well, so that while you enjoy reading the story of a family's life with tipper lorries and demolition, in 50 pages, with twice that many interesting mainly period pictures, rebuilding some of London for the future, you will also be contributing to a good cause.

## CORGI ANNOUNCES ITS 'FIRST HALF' FOR 2015

Corgi has announced the new models which it intends to release during the first six months of 2015. Unfortunately, there are only a few 'classics' which will be of particular interest to Vintage Roadscene readers and no new castings.

There are five additions to the Original Omnibus Company range, an AEC Regent V with Roe double-deck body in Hartlepool Corporation livery, a Crossley DD42 in Ashton Corporation colours, plus another version of the modern New Routemaster, Wright Eclipse Gemini and Eclipse 2. Each will come with a choice of two destinations, as usual, although again only one fleet number and registration will be available.

In the Vanguards range, which seems to be concentrating on cars of the 1980s these days, there will be new versions of Triumph Stag, Ford Capri Mk 1 and 3, Granada Mk II and Fiesta XR2, Volkswagen Golf Mk I and 2, Mini 1275GT, Vauxhall Astra Mk 2 and Carlton and similar Opel Omega, BMW E30 saloon and coupé, plus the Lotus Esprit S1 and S2 and modern Bentley Continental GT3.

New truck models in the 'Hauliers of Renown' range, 11 in all, are based on the modern Mercedes-Benz Actros MP4, Scania R and T Series, Volvo FH and MAN TGX, with various different trailers, but no classic lorries of any type.

There are also nine new aircraft models in the Aviation Archive series, the Bloodhound SSC record car, yet another version of the James Bond Aston Martin DB5, with the more 'toy'-based 'Superhailer' 1/64 scale trucks and 'Showcase' small-scale aircraft.

## SOUNDS MECHANICAL

MY LIFE –BY COLIN SHEARS  
THE WEST COUNTRY HISTORIC  
OMNIBUS & TRANSPORT TRUST  
(WHOTT)  
WWW.BUSMUSEUM.ORG.UK  
ISBN: 978-0-9568284-3-9  
AVAILABLE FROM  
'KALMIA', CHURCH ROAD,  
COLATON RALEIGH,  
DEVON EX10 0LW  
£7.20, INCLUDING POSTAGE.

This is a thoroughly enjoyable collection of memories and anecdotes, all involving vehicles of one sort or another, from the late-1930s to more recent times. The author is a well-known preservationist, responsible for setting up the vehicle collection at Winkleigh in Devon. For him, the sound of the vehicle's engine,

gearbox and so on are all part of the appeal, which is brought out in this book, hence the title.

This little book has obviously been put together with great interest and affection, complete with some great old photographs, bringing all sorts of scenes from the past very much to life, in the words of somebody who was there – often at the rather sharp end.

This is the latest of several similar books from WHOTT, which holds annual rallies and has its own exhibition vehicle, magazine and website, through which various publications are available, with a view to establishing its own museum in the future.

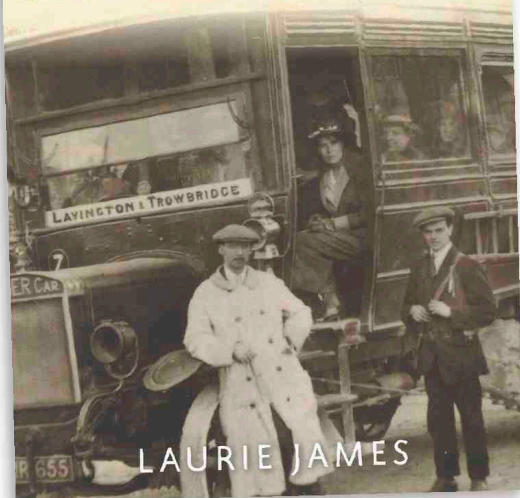
## SOUNDS MECHANICAL



My life - by Colin Shears



# LAVINGTON & DEVIZES MOTOR SERVICES



## LAVINGTON & DEVIZES MOTOR SERVICES

BY LAURIE JAMES  
AMBERLEY PUBLISHING  
THE HILL MERRYWALKS  
STROUD  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL5 4EP  
WWW.AMBERLEY-BOOKS.COM  
ISBN: 978-1-4456-3918-5  
£12.99

This interesting book tells the story of a company which was built up during the early days of bus services, as motor buses took the place of horse-drawn vehicles. It explains how Fred Sayer, who had worked for BET, found a niche between the various competing 'area' companies, Bath Tramways, National – later Western National – and Wilts & Dorset, to cover routes around Market Lavington and Devizes in Wiltshire.

He built up a surprisingly large network of services during the 1920s, as well as plenty of excursions, using a fleet of char-a-bancs and buses, mainly built on ex-military World War I chassis to start with, modified and improved over the years. However, lack of

investment as times got harder into the 1930s forced the company to sell out to Bath Tramways Motor Company, coming under Tilling control.

The development of this interesting company and its demise are covered most thoroughly, backed up by a surprising number of period photographs, along with some discussion of what went before and what has happened since, with pictures of more recent vehicles in the area covered, plus appendices listing the vehicles, services and more. Even if you only have a passing interest in bus services in Wiltshire, this book has plenty of general interest for the transport enthusiast or historian.

## THE COACH ROADS TO BRIGHTON

BY GEOFF HEWLETT  
PEN PRESS, BRIGHTON  
ISBN: 978-1780037752  
£15

'Many roads link London to the south coast. Large parts of them still follow routes which became well established in the days when travel by horse-drawn coaches was the fastest and most efficient form of transport.'

Before cars, motorways and bypasses and even trains, horse-drawn vehicles carried the British people all around the country. The old coach roads led the way, and while travellers were less comfortable than today's car passenger, they felt the benefits of a less altered landscape, birdsong and the scent of the breeze.

The old roads were a vital part of our nation's history. Canals, rivers and the sea could be used to move goods if the goods concerned were near them – but roads were the arteries along which the lifeblood of the nation moved. The development of the coach road mirrored the development of the nation through the industrial age, which has probably been partly responsible for the romance of the coach road to modern eyes...

Based on the author's detailed study of the coach roads and his own experiences of walking the length of each of them in turn, *The Coach Roads to Brighton* details the histories of each of the old routes from London to the coastal town of Brighton, telling stories of the people, horses and vehicles that used them and often shocking, inspiring and humorous anecdotes from the days when bridles chinked and carriage wheels raised dust, as Regency England followed its prince to the seaside.

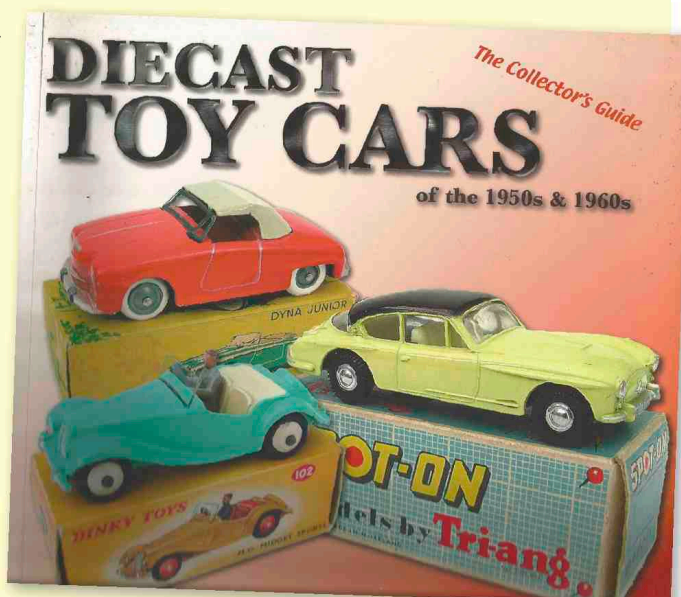
## DIECAST TOY CARS OF THE 1950S & 1960S

THE COLLECTORS GUIDE  
BY ANDREW RALSTON  
WWW.DIGITAL.VELOCE.CO.UK  
ISBN: 978-1-845848-09-5  
£7.49

To quote the publisher, "collecting vintage diecast toy cars has become an increasingly popular hobby over the last 25 years, and this book provides a comprehensive overview of the companies that made these toys during the 1950s and 1960s. As well as examining the major names such as Dinky Toys, Corgi Toys and Matchbox (Great Britain), Solido (France), Tekno (Denmark) and Tootsietoy (USA), this book is unique in its coverage of many smaller and more obscure brands, not only from Europe or the USA but from countries as far afield as Japan, Israel and Argentina. The book provides fascinating insights into the history of individual companies, accompanied by 300 photographs of rare examples, most of them with their original boxes. A further unique feature is the inclusion of a

large selection of colourful and evocative illustrations from catalogues and period trade advertisements. For the newcomer to the hobby, this volume will provide an ideal introduction to the history of the manufacturers active in this field, while experienced collectors will make many new discoveries."

This is a new digital version of a book which has been available for a while as a paperback, which would also be worth finding, if you would rather have 'something in your hand'. Andrew is a very knowledgeable collector and the book is most interesting for collectors, old and new, well-written with many excellent pictures.





# JANUARY SALE

## SUBSCRIPTION OFFERS

Beat the January blues and take out a magazine subscription from as little as £10

SAVE up to  
**66%**



SAVE up to  
**41%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**34%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**39%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**34%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**37%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**34%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**37%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**39%**

12 ISSUES FOR £20  
24 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**39%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**32%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**32%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £30



SAVE up to  
**31%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**26%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £30



SAVE up to  
**34%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £30



SAVE up to  
**32%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**34%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £30



SAVE up to  
**33%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £30



SAVE up to  
**66%**

6 ISSUES FOR £10  
12 ISSUES FOR £12



SAVE up to  
**31%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**37%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £30



SAVE up to  
**27%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**33%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
13 ISSUES FOR £35



SAVE up to  
**34%**

6 ISSUES FOR £20  
12 ISSUES FOR £30

### IT'S EASY TO ORDER

ONLINE [subscriptiongiftshop.co.uk/js14](http://subscriptiongiftshop.co.uk/js14) CALL 0845 872 7385 & quote offer code JS14

Hotline open: Mon-Fri 8am-9.30pm, Sat 9am-4pm. Please note that calls are charged at your local rate, for further information please check with your service provider.

SAVE MONEY ON MANY OTHER POPULAR TITLES : [subscriptiongiftshop.co.uk/js14](http://subscriptiongiftshop.co.uk/js14)



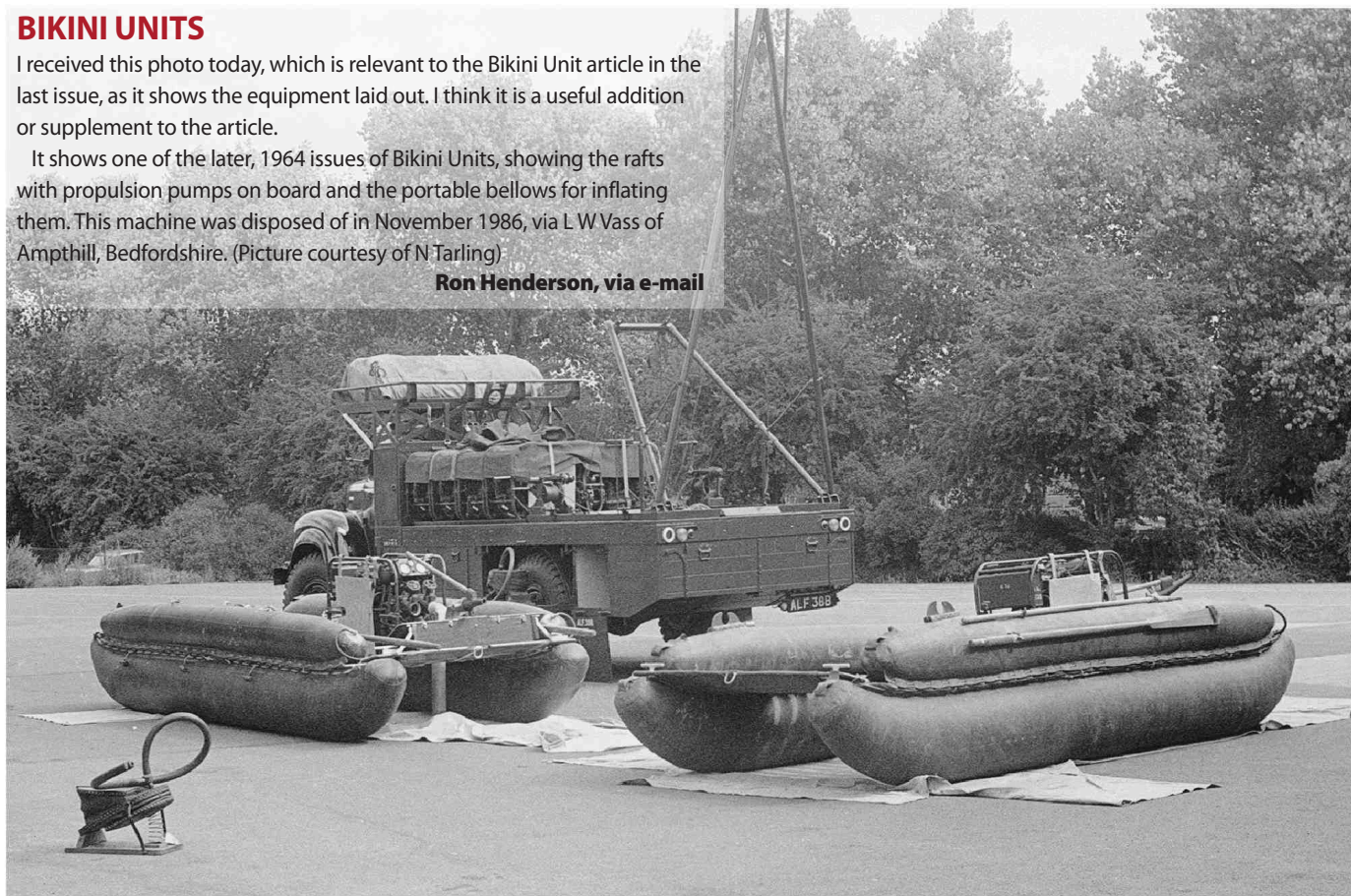
WRITE TO: THE EDITOR, VINTAGE ROADSCENE, KELSEY PUBLISHING LTD.,  
CUDHAM TITHE BARN, BERRY'S HILL, CUDHAM, KENT TN16 3AG OR EMAIL: MIKE.FORBES@KELSEY.CO.UK

## BIKINI UNITS

I received this photo today, which is relevant to the Bikini Unit article in the last issue, as it shows the equipment laid out. I think it is a useful addition or supplement to the article.

It shows one of the later, 1964 issues of Bikini Units, showing the rafts with propulsion pumps on board and the portable bellows for inflating them. This machine was disposed of in November 1986, via L W Vass of Ampthill, Bedfordshire. (Picture courtesy of N Tarling)

**Ron Henderson, via e-mail**



## RELIANCES REMEMBERED

It was great to read the article on the above in the December issue. I went through the list, to find those which I had driven during my time with the ill-fated Classic Coaches at High Wycombe.

West Riding 803, JHL 983, had a Roe Dalesman body with a centre entrance; fine for excursions and private hires but not so good for one-manned stage carriage work, when used on the Buckinghamshire Heritage Bus Network in the 1990s.

WWN 191 had a Harrington Cavalier body and was one of the Neath and Cardiff 'Brown Bombers' about which a video film was made.

HLP 10C had either a Harrington Cavalier or Grenadier body and, when I first encountered it, bore Premier Travel blue livery. It was then repainted in Classic Coaches blue/cream livery and is now back in the attractive livery of its original operator, Surrey Coaches.

I was surprised to see ANW 710C on the list under the ownership of David Crowther (the one-time proprietor of Classic Coaches) as I had been led to believe that this vehicle had been destroyed by fire many years ago. If this was not true I am delighted to learn of its survival (can anybody confirm this?), as it was a lovely vehicle, affectionately known by those in

Leeds as 'the coach' as I understood it was used by the City Council for committee transport. It was the only Reliance I drove that was semi-automatic.

I think I was David Crowther's first part-time driver as, hitherto, he had done all the driving himself. In addition to the Reliances, it gave me the opportunity to drive Bristol RELs, RELHs, VRs, an MW (on which I could not master the Bristol five-speed box with the fifth gear accessed through a second gate from fourth) and also an AEC Regent V. How good was that! What a shame it all went wrong.

Finally, to change the subject, the article on the Fordson fire appliances reminded me that, when I was a young child (probably around 1950), my Father took me to see the Lord Mayor's Show in London, when I think the theme was a tribute to those serving in London during the war and the procession included Fordson and Austin fire appliances in the wartime grey livery of the National Fire Service (in which my Mother served during the war), which was the successor to the Auxilliary Fire Service.

The fantastic street scenes in the magazine just bring the memories flooding back, thank you.

**Graham McQueen, via e-mail**

## MORE ON THAT CROSSLEY

May I expand briefly on the 'Crossley' photographed by Barry Fenn in your December issue? It is not a Crossley, but a Willys Overland design assembled by Crossley at its Stockport factory. The company began by assembling Willys Overland cars in 1920, but did not turn to commercials until 1926. This 25 cwt lorry had a 2½ litre four cylinder side-valve engine, three-speed gearbox and axles imported from the US, but the rest of the design was made by Crossley.

In 1928, a larger 35 cwt model was launched, with a 3.6-litre Lycoming engine, and this was badged as the Manchester. Variations included a six-wheeler and a 14-seater coach. The final model was an all-British 2½-tonner with forward control, which never went into production. The Manchester name was dropped after 1933. They were well-made, but too expensive when compared with the new Model A Ford or Chevrolet/Bedford.

As the one Barry saw was badged Willys-Overland Crossley rather than Manchester, it must be a pre-1928 model.

**Nick Georgano, Guernsey**



## CONTENTS

As a recent subscriber to VR, I find the moans about content a little strange. Yes there may be loads of people out there, who've been there, seen it and got the T-shirt, but a lot of us have mainly spent our lives pursuing other hobbies and interests – in my case aviation – so this is mostly all new to me and others.

A few comments on this month's edition Page 37 is definitely in Coventry – I used to walk past the Admiral Codrington nearly every day! The footpath is long gone as are the surrounding buildings and the pub is cut off from the city centre by the Inner Ring Road and surrounded by double yellow lines - therefore it is now shut!

On page 58 there are some yellow Busby Vans. I was working for BT when these were introduced, the colour was not popular among those working in country areas, as it made it difficult for the driver to find a safe place for a nap!

With winter descending on us, I am reminded

of an incident back in the early 1960s. I was goods despatch and receiving clerk at a small business in Coventry and dealt with a constant stream of vehicles of all shapes and sizes. One of these belonged to a small local company which delivered its goods in what I seem to remember as being something akin to a van bodied Humber Snipe or Hawk (I did say I was into aviation then!) This vehicle had no heater and the driver was not a happy soul.

One day he arrived beaming with delight and insisted on showing his 'modifications' to the van. He had taken out the passenger seat and roped down a Valor paraffin stove, the vertical cylinder type. This was pumping out considerable heat and he was truly pleased with his ingenuity. Our foreman put it into perspective, when he mused about what might happen in a collision!

If you do want to think about other content, how about some pre-war lorries. My late father used to tell me tales of riding on the pillion of his brother's motorbike, behind solid tyred

lorries and steam wagons on the old A45 to Birmingham and back, when he couldn't see a thing for dust and steam and smoke...

**Malcolm Barratt, via e-mail**

## CONTENTS 2

I realise that you have had quite a lot of correspondence regarding the content of Vintage Roadscene but, if I can add my voice, I would not like to see any big changes.

I am now retired but in my working life as a mechanic, I worked on all kinds of road transport, cars, light goods vehicles, heavy goods, buses and coaches, (even the odd motorcycle and tractor) and I think that the content of the magazine is excellent and it is the reason that I took out a subscription in the first place, I enjoy it very much.

If people want to read just about one particular kind of vehicle, there are lots of other publications to do just that. Please keep up the good work.

**John Sutton, Melton Mowbray, Leics.**

## SEDDONS, SD FREIGHTERS AND RELIANCES

Thanks for VR180. Not only do I appreciate your printing of my correction and photographs on page 72, but the entire magazine was good. I shall try to produce a report for you of this year's Glasgow Vehicle Vintage Trust Open Day.

For the record, both of my pictures you published on the same page of VR180 were taken at last year's GVVTT open day (October 13th 2013) at Bridgeton Bus Garage. LTY197E is an Albion Super Riever 20 of 1967, registered in Newcastle upon Tyne carrying the livery of P Drummond of Armadale, Lothian. The Albion EN250H engine was pictured fitted beneath an Albion Claymore CL3 exhibited on that day.

I do think that John Biterlick should look through some of your recent back-issues, especially the one which pictured Royal Mail special-purpose vehicles, as mobile post-offices GPO1 and GPO2 had Seddon tractor-units post-war. As picture-archivist of Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust, I have seen images of several marks of Seddon used by the GPO in the Ron Doig photographic collection willed to us, these pictures are all © Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust and will be passed on to the Post Office Vehicle Club.

I will say that the reason so few Seddon buses survive is that they were not that durable anyway. At Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust we have many of the remaining Pennine 7s, but the RU was a self-destructive product, as the recently deceased Geoffrey Hillditch discovered. Mr Biterlick should read G G Hillditch's book 'A Further look at Buses'. As for the Pennine 4, Kowloon Motor Bus purchased

100 Pennine-bodied examples and regretted it, some of them were falling apart, catching fire and smashing their sumps on hills on their first day in service.

As far as the Seddon 32-four goes, it was a clone of the Guy Big J4T, using the same Motor Panels cab, and the same range of engines and transmissions, and if Guy had been able to build enough of the original quickly enough, then the Oldham clone would not have happened: same with the Seddon Pennine RU bus with regard to the Bristol RE. I wrote the Wikipedia articles on the RU and the Pennine 7, so I'm well versed in the sources on this.

Malcolm Bates' article on lorry and bus applications of the Shelvoke and Drewry is good; I'd like to add that Southdown inherited two rear-engined Freighters, ordered by Tramocar, which had 26 seat central entrance Harrington bodies and were delivered in 1938, while Crosville replaced Freighter toastracks acquired from Brookes Brothers (White Rose) of Rhyl with some wonderful streamlined ECW versions in 1937.

W Gates of Worthing, who traded as Tram-O-Car – later dropping the hyphens – actually had the tenth Freighter built, the first bus (PX 262) completed 1923, which was originally a demonstrator, buying the marque exclusively from 1924 until the Southdown takeover. Also, according to David Kaye's Buses and Trolleybuses 1919-1945, Plymouth, Bournemouth and Blackpool were, with Belfast, municipal purchasers of Freighter buses, not all of them toastracks. The late Mr Kaye's three Blandford Pocket Encyclopaedias (published 1968-73) are an invaluable resource. It's just a shame that the later large Blandford

follow up (not by him) was so disappointing.

I look forward to VR181, as I was a child passenger on the Johnstone miniature owned by Caroline-Seagull of Great Yarmouth, which leads me to an interesting omission in Malcolm Wright's piece about East Kent and Maidstone and District Reliances, the re-bodilying by East Kent.

In 1972 to 1974, East Kent had new 49 seat Plaxton Panorama Elite II or III bodies fitted to 519-38 FN and 6359-6548 FN. Caroline-Seagull later ran a lot of these; Park Royals GJD 640-3D and Willowbrook OJG 137F were also purchased and run by Caroline-Seagull. They operated many of the re-bodies to a grand old age, re-registering at least one as LAH 817A to move the cherished plate (531 FN) onto newer stock. They were suitably inspired to do two of their own, FEX 817-8T, which had Plaxton Supreme III bodies on the rebuilt chassis of ex-East Kent DJG 628-31C.

Later East Kent had some of the HFN-L Reliances re-bodied by Ensign with Berkhof Esprite bodies, and the dealer got them new A/TAR plates.

Caroline-Seagull was the trading name, the company title was Cobholm Hire Services, which had garages at Cobholm in southern Gorleston and Caister to the north of Great Yarmouth. Although one of its recovery vehicles was a fairly normal Bedford KM, the other was an AEC Mammoth Major 6 Mk V which latterly carried a Ford D-Series tilt-cab to bizarre effect...

I hope the 'change of address' increases your prosperity and that of the magazine, which I have perused from the Stevens-Stratten era.

**Stephen Allcroft, Cardross, Scotland**



## T J KIDNER

Having read my January copy of Vintage Roadscene, on Boxing Day, I thought I must e-mail you with reference to T J Kidner. I don't know your age, but I am nearly 57 years old and, like you, I can clearly remember my father driving us in his old Ford 100E car along the same road, so my late mother could see the rhododendrons in flower and, like you, I was more interested in transport operators we passed en route from our home in Wickham Market, having passed Yoxford Transport Co on the main A12, then looking forward to father slowly driving past Kidner's yard.

I think they also operated Scammell Highwayman tractor units, possibly with bulk stainless steel milk tankers – perhaps some of your other readers could confirm this?

My father, who is now 90 years old and spent most of his life driving lorries for our family business of E R & R Rackham Ltd, Deben Mills, Wickham Market, Suffolk, enjoys reading the various articles on the old operators he can remember in your magazine.

After we ceased flour milling in the early 1960s, we carried on supplying local bakeries with flour produced by Walter Green flour mills in Beccles, Suffolk, which operated Commer rigid delivery lorries and I often went with Dad in his Ford Thames diesel powered 4 cylinder ET to Beccles to collect flour and wheatfeed, passing Kidner's yard en route. We also operated at that time a Ford four cylinder dropside Thames Trader and a six cylinder petrol engined dropside Morris Commercial. I could forward some old photos of these if you are interested – please let me know.

**David Rackham**

*Thanks for this - it's nice to know that my ramblings mean something to other people! I'd forgotten Yoxford Transport and the Kidner Scammells as well. We'd love to see pictures of your family's vehicles and to put them in the magazine.*

## BLACK & WHITE COACH STATION

Thank you for publishing a magazine which conveys exactly what its title says. Thanks to Mr Hannay for his superb model of the Black & White coach station at Cheltenham in issue 182 for January.

There is one important detail missing – me! Sitting on the wall at 2.00 pm most days. There was the 2.00 pm departure, then a mini departure at 4.00 pm – overflows and reliefs.

The names flood back to me, Eastern National, Gliderways, Stratford Blue... I sat there transfixed and 'numb-bummed', enveloped in diesel fumes and smoke – 'wonderful'!

My youngest son and I took the first Paris trip on a Daimler Freeline, with the Perkins (or was it Cummins?) V8. A mistake to grab the back seat in a rear-engined coach. Done it wrong again, Dad!

To the left of the depot was an orphanage, now 'Dowty House', an excellent care home. The road at the left hand side is 'Monson Avenue'. In the days when there were lots of 'digs', bed and breakfast for the overnighing drivers, on the opposite corner was the 'Gamecock' pub, where any night there could be heard many regional accents and 'diesel dialogue' in abundance. Oh, happy days...

Before the Severn Bridge, Cheltenham Spa was on the main trunk road – which is still the A40 – from South Wales to London. The drivers of 'heavies' would prefer Cheltenham to miss the long pull up 'Crickley Hill'! Oh, and the attraction of certain young ladies, along the Lansdowne Road, after a cuppa at 'Smokey Joe's' at Longlevens – memories, memories!

Many nights, I stood at 'Boots' Corner, spotting the eight-wheelers and then artics, swing right at Boots Corner, laden with tinplate for Ford of Dagenham or Vauxhall Motors at Luton. After a snooze, I would log them on the way back – laden with scrap!

I would often be 'given the lights' as they turned – wow – Richard Read, George Read, James Smith (English Bicknor) Valley Carriers, Entress – oh, I could go on and on. An all entered in my two little books – registration numbers, details of makes, etc – lorries and buses or coaches – wonderful!

Well, got to go. Just renewed my HGV licence (annual medical now) and off up to Dover this afternoon.

**Douglas Vick, Cheltenham Spa.**

## CLASSIC SPARES

Brake and clutch hydraulic spares for post 1935 classic and vintage buses, coaches and commercials. Kits for master cylinders, wheel cylinders and slave cylinders. New and recon cylinders.

Brake hoses from stock or made to pattern. Cylinder resleeving service and one off manufacture available.

Contact: Ian Wonnacott, Classic Spares, The Forge, Fore Street, Kenton, Devon EX6 8LF.  
Phone/Fax: 01626 891645  
email: [ian@classic-parts.co.uk](mailto:ian@classic-parts.co.uk)  
[www.classic-parts.co.uk](http://www.classic-parts.co.uk)

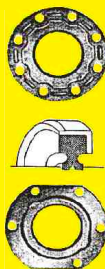
## OIL SEAL UK

**HUGE RANGE**  
OF LEATHER, RUBBER, FELT  
OIL SEALS AVAILABLE

COMMERCIAL, TRACTOR,  
CAR, MOTORCYCLE 1920-1980

For more information contact:  
Jonathan Welch, 7 Spinney Way,  
Needlingworth, St Ives, PE27 4SR

Tel: 01480 462611  
[sales@oilsealuk.co.uk](mailto:sales@oilsealuk.co.uk)  
[www.oilsealuk.co.uk](http://www.oilsealuk.co.uk)



## CPA Services

Vintage & Classic Radiator Restoration for the  
Commercial Vehicle, Bus & Coach Enthusiast



Quality radiator restoration and  
repair service.

For prompt personal service and  
advice please contact Jess Dille.

We also offer specialist turbo  
charger, air brake, oil cooking and  
water pump repairs.

Units 4 & 5, Site 4, Alma Park Road, Alma Park  
Industrial Estate, Grantham NG31 9SE

Tel: (01476) 571 404 Mob: 07714 152 394

Fax: (01476) 579 636

Vintage [www.roadscene.com](http://www.roadscene.com)  
**ROADSCENE**

**TO ADVERTISE IN**

Vintage [www.roadscene.com](http://www.roadscene.com)  
**ROADSCENE**

**PLEASE CALL THE TALK MEDIA  
SALES TEAM ON 01732 445325**

## WINDSCREEN RUBBER

Original Pattern Dies available for the following makes & models

**AEC MkV • AEC Park Royal • AEC/Leyland Tilt Cabs  
• Austin FFK • Bedford 'QL' • Atkinson Borderer  
• Commer TS3 • Dodge 'K' Series • ERF 'A' and 'LV'  
• Foden S21/S80 • Ford D' Series • Thames Trader  
• Scammel Crusader • Seddon 1970's**

Also door draught strips & non original rubbers that may fit  
your lorry. Please ring Mike Gosling and leave a message

**TEL: 01953 607295**



## RAILWAY VANS

You may wish to include this in a future Scene and Heard in response to John Raggett's excellent article on British Railways vans. Apologies for taking six months to get there, but better late than never.

I was interested to read John Raggett's article on the above. I too was employed by British Rail and then National Carriers in the late 1960s until the mid-'70s, starting off as an apprentice at the Leyton Workshop, London E10..

I was amazed to see the photograph of the Karrier Bantam, LJH 810J, which was unusual in so much that this must have been one of the last Bantams to be produced.

Together with a fellow Apprentice I was sent to the Imperial Coachworks, Basildon (part of the then mighty Crane Fruehauf

empire), to collect two new parcels vans. When we arrived, there were several new Commer Walkthru vans, decked out in yellow REPS (Rail Express Parcels Service) livery parked in the yard, but we were shown to two Bantams.

These were, in effect, modernisations of the Bantams built at BR's own Temple Mills Works, designated with 2 KH fleet numbers 10 years previously, even to drop down lower door sections to cater for the front section of the wheel arch. The other major difference was the Perkins 4.203 engine replacing the earlier Rootes, Massey Ferguson derived, engine used in their predecessors, aluminium rather than timber-based body construction, and a full rear shutter in place of the previously favoured tailboard and shutter closure arrangement.

I believe there were only two of these

produced. No other examples were seen by me and subsequent enquiries made with ex-Imperial personnel and former BR/ NCL specification engineers produced no recollection of these examples, let alone any others. I can only surmise that they were left-over old stock, perhaps bought on the cheap because, by then BR/ NCL had all but standardised on the Walkthru as the standard REPS van with a limited number of Bedford J types and BMC/ Leyland FGs

Both LJH 810J and LJH 811J ( LJH 809J perhaps) were originally allocated to Liverpool St. Parcels and must have been transferred to Woking later in life.

Thank you John for an interesting article and if you have other photos I would be delighted to see them. Please contact me via the Editor.

**John Clark, via e-mail**

## NEXT MONTH... MARCH ISSUE ON SALE FEBRUARY 20TH

\* Circumstances might cause the planned contents to change

### Goodbye Earls Court



**AUSTRALIAN  
ROAD TRAINS**

**BEDFORDS IN  
NEW ZEALAND**

**TWINS**

**MORE CAUGHT  
IN TIME  
AND MEMORIES  
OF THE PAST**

## RALLY ROUND-UP AND MUCH MORE...



# ECKMAN...MAKING GARDENING EASIER

## THERE'S NO JOB TOO TALL!

### 9FT 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" TELESCOPIC HEDGE TRIMMER

**£89.99** RRP £139.99

**SAVE £50**

**MULTI-ANGLE...  
MULTI-DIRECTIONAL...**



**FAST SAFE TRIMMING**

Trim the tops of your high hedges quickly, easily and in complete safety keeping both feet on the ground with the uk's tallest hedge trimmer from eckman!

At over 9ft tall, yet still weighing a mere 3.8kg (just 8.4lbs), and supplied with a generous 10metre power lead, it's perfect for cutting hedges of almost any height and at any angle without the twisting, stooping and bending or wobbling on ladders that you'd normally have with traditional inferior trimmers.

Its strong but lightweight aluminium telescopic pole extends from 1.85m (6ft 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>") to an incredible 2.8m (9ft 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>") and it powers through stems up to 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" in diameter at 3200 rpm with its low vibration 450watt motor and 140degree angle adjustable, 45cm (17<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" long), razor sharp, double action reciprocating blade.

**Features:** Double safety switching and a clever 'double-fixing' padded shoulder strap for greater control and comfort. Manufactured to the highest CE/GS/TUV European Safety Standards.

**EXTENDS TO A MASSIVE 9FT 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"**

**Super lightweight aluminium, weighs just 3.8kg (8.4lbs)**



### 9FT 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" TELESCOPIC BRANCH LOPPER

**£79.99** RRP £129.99

**SAVE £50**

Lopping out-of-reach branches needn't be a chore, problem, or safety issue with this mains-powered lightweight telescopic chainsaw from eckman.

Its handle adjusts and locks to extend reach from an already impressive 1.8m to a massive 2.88m (5ft 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" - 9ft 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>") meaning most jobs can be tackled from the ground - without the use of a ladder.

Featuring a powerful 710 watt electric motor that accelerates the extra-long, high quality 'low kick-back' Oregon chain up to an incredible 11 metres per second, allowing it to slice through branches up to an impressive 10" in diameter with ease.

Its specially angled 10" Oregon bar means there's now even more control over your cutting action, so combine this with ultra-low vibration, supreme power, adjustable length and the best quality chain on the market and here's a piece of gardening equipment you'll feel like carrying on working with hour after hour.

**Super lightweight aluminium, weighs just 3.9kg (8.6lbs)**

**EXTENDS TO A MASSIVE 9FT 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"**



**Power through 10" diameter branches easily and safely**

**Specifications:** 2-section telescopic shaft manufactured from tough but lightweight fibreglass with non-slip rubberised grip; 10m mains power cord; oil tank capacity 150ml with automatic feed and level indicator. Fully CE European safety approved.

**SAVE AN EXTRA £10 Buy both the Hedge Trimmer and the Branch Lopper - JUST £159.98**

**ORDER BY PHONE**  
**0844 441 3010**

**ORDER BY POST**  
**Eckman (CODE EKVR071)**  
Euro House, Cremers Rd, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3US

**ORDER ONLINE**  
**www.eckman.co.uk**

CODE	ITEM	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
EKETH701	Eckman 9ft Electric Telescopic Hedge Trimmer (RRP £139.99)	£89.99		
EKETCS01	Eckman Telescopic Branch Lopper (RRP £129.99)	£79.99		
EKZ001	BUY BOTH Eckman Hedge Trimmer & Branch Lopper	£159.98		
WWD34765H	Helmet, Face & Ear Protector	£19.99		
WWD32897H	Protective Safety Glasses	£3.99		
	Standard 7 Working Day Delivery	£3.99	-	£3.99
<b>ORDER TOTAL £</b>				

Our standard delivery to UK mainland costs just £3.99 and takes up to 7 working days. Customers have 30 days from receipt of goods to approve purchase. If needed, simply call us to arrange return of item (undamaged and in original packaging) for a replacement or refund. Calls to 0844 numbers are charged at local rate for many customers. Eckman is a trading style of Direct Response Fulfillment PLC. Registered Number 03000416, Euro House, Cremers Road, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3US.



**QUOTE EKVR071 WHEN ORDERING**



All Eckman products come with a 30-Day No-Risk Approval Period so you can order with total confidence

I enclose cheque/PO (payable to Eckman) or charge my Mastercard/Visa/Maestro/ Visa Electron Card No:



Security No (last 3 digits on signature strip):

Expiry Date:

Start Date:

Issue No:

Signature:

Name:

Address:

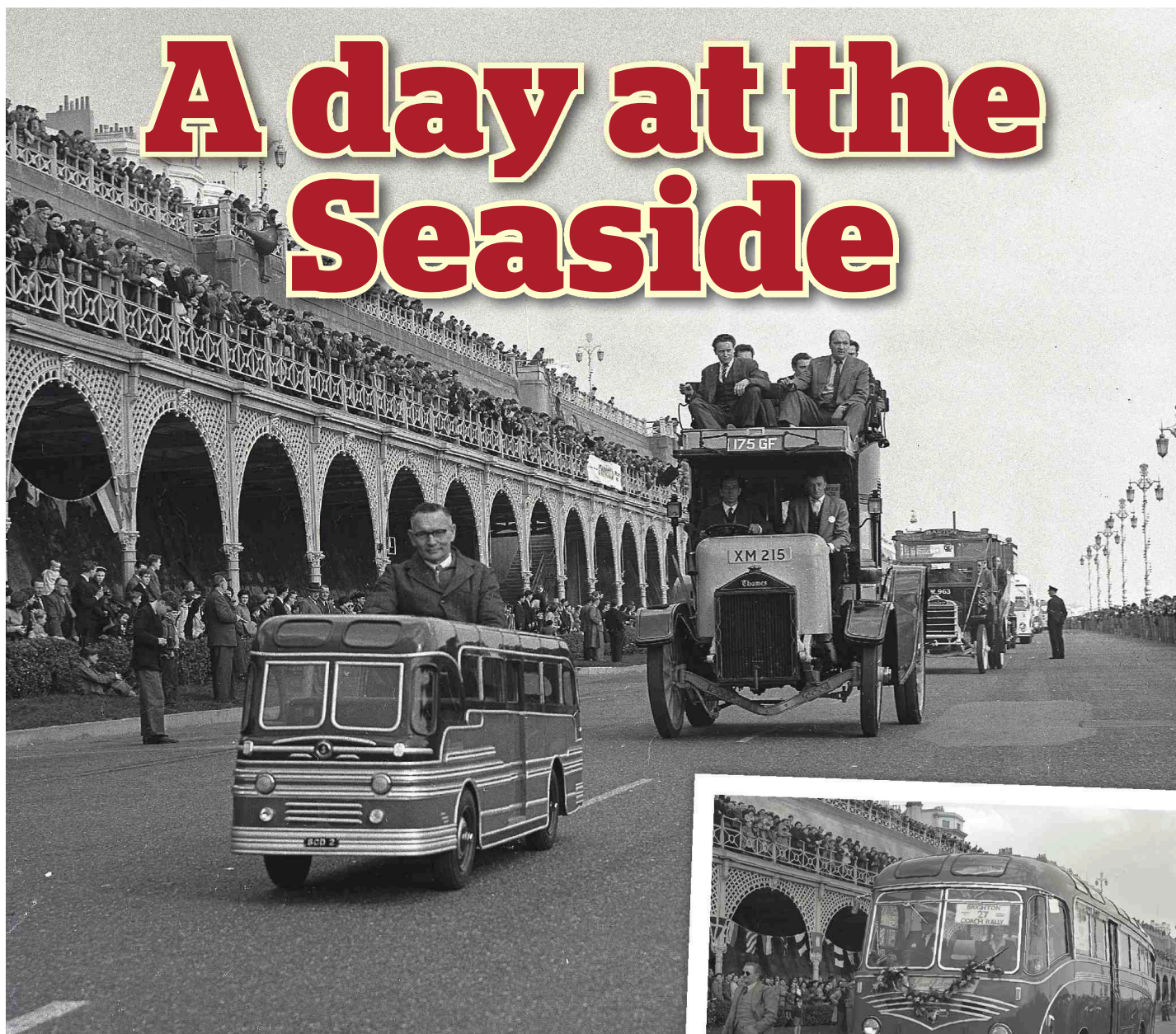
Tel:

Email:

If you would rather not receive promotional postal offers from carefully selected third parties, please tick here ☐



# A day at the Seaside



**H**aving taken it upon myself to use a couple of snowy scenes last month, "as it looked as if we would have a mild and wet winter", whereupon it promptly snowed and blew gales in the North of England, as a way of saying that I'm sorry, here are some rather sunnier views. They are also pictures which connect with other recent articles. They were taken at the second British Coach Rally in April 1956, which ended on Madeira Drive, Brighton.

Firstly, we have what was probably the then the latest of Johnston's Miniature coaches, discussed in the December 2014 issue. Registered SCD 2, it's one of the later models, based on the Yeates Riviera design, which is now in Scotland in Stagecoach livery! It is leading a parade of the entrants and following the Johnston miniature is the Thames Coach, which is now in the Louwman Museum in Holland, as we saw in

an article back in January 2014. The Thames coach is followed here by Barton's Daimler Char-a-banc rebuild, the original Commercar bus and a Thornycroft double-decker, all vehicles well-known from the early years of the preservation movement. Then came the participating coaches, led by the overall winner.

Commercial Motor reported on the rally, under the heading 'BTC Triumphs', as follows: "The premier award in the second British Coach Rally, held at Brighton last week-end, went to a 1956 Bristol-ECW 32-seater operated by Eastern Counties Omnibus Co Ltd, thus making it an outright win for the British Transport Commission. This vehicle gained the highest marks in the road section, driving tests and the concours d'elegance.

A 26-seat Duple-bodied Leyland Royal Tiger entered by Southdown Motor Services, Ltd won the premier award in the concours

d'elegance, second place going to the outright winner. The Coach Driver of the Year is Mr S Pennell, who obtained the highest marks in the road section and driving tests in the oldest competing vehicle, a 1949 Bedford-Duple 29-seater, run by Premier Travel Ltd.

Forty-four operators entered 53 coaches in the rally. Places as far afield as Caerphilly, Oswestry, Wigan and Sheffield were represented, although most of the entries came from London, the Home Counties and the South.

The rally, organised by 'Passenger Transport', began on Saturday morning, coaches leaving the starting control at Esher, Surrey, at two-minute intervals from 9.45. On the 80-mile route, via Guildford, Hindhead,



Midhurst, Goodwood, Arundel and Worthing, there were three control points at which the coaches had to report and four secret controls.

Each vehicle began with 100 marks, deductions being made if they were early or late at the controls. A regularity test was conducted on the Midhurst to Goodwood stretch of the route, the vehicles being allowed 20 minutes in which to cover the eight miles between the two points.

On arrival at Brighton, the coaches were put through five driving tests on Madeira Drive. An acceleration and braking test required the vehicles to travel 220 yards and brake in a 'box' measuring 45 ft long and 9 ft wide. In a stiff kerb-parking test, coaches had to reverse into another 'box', measuring 50 ft long and 10 ft wide, and park with the off-side wheels within 6 inches of the kerb.

The third test, a braking and reversing trial, required the coaches to cover a 50 yd stretch and to stop within two lines 10 yd apart, reverse with all four wheels over the first line and to go forward again, stopping astride another line 50 yd away. A starting test and a 'wobble-wobble' trial completed the driving competition. The 'wobble-wobble' familiar to car rally drivers, involved negotiating four pylons spaced at equal distances along the centre of the road, driving into another bay, reversing, accelerating forward, reversing

into an adjoining bay, and again moving forward and coming to rest astride another line." Not so dissimilar to the Bus Driver of the Year competition, which Bill Berry tells us about elsewhere in this issue.

The other pictures show the Bristol-ECW LS coach, UNG 766, of Eastern Counties, be-decked with garlands as befits the winner, the Southdown Leyland Royal Tiger, NUF 79, with its similarly adorned Duple centre-entrance body – we love the fella in the plus-fours, and notice the crowds of on-lookers in the pictures. These were both the latest tour coaches for the companies, with limited numbers of seats, with their antimacassars, and roof-lights.

The last picture shows the winner of the driving tests, as always in those days, wearing his white dust-coat and cap at a jaunty angle, holding the cups he won. The CM report thought it significant that he was driving the oldest vehicle on the rally – all of seven years old at the time – but, of course, the Premier Travel Bedford OB had become very out-dated by the mid-1950s, when



underfloor-engined single-deckers and coaches had become the in thing.

The British Coach Rally is still held most years, at various venues. The funny thing is that you would be quite likely to see a semi-preserved Bedford OB or vehicles similar to these 1950s coaches at today's events.





**Exclusive  
First  
Editions**

# THIS MONTH'S NEW RELEASES

1:76 Scale '00' gauge precision diecast models

**Exclusive  
First  
Editions**

*Details May Be Subject to Change*



**14902 Leyland National MkII Short**

**RIBBLE N.B.C.**

Our Ribble enthusiasts will be pleased to see a new addition to our range with this MKII Leyland National in NBC colours which will compliment our previously released Leyland Olympian. Registered JCK 849W, fleet number 849, it is shown working on route 646 to Penrith.

**DECEMBER RELEASE**



**39001**

**Foden S24 Short 2 Axle Tipper**

**LIMMER & TRINIDAD**

The first in a new casting variation sees restored a Foden S24 fitted with our short 2 axle tipper body. Our model depicts the preserved HOR 203E, working in the livery of Limmer & Trinidad a long established London based company, supplying Tarmac for Britain's roads.

**JANUARY RELEASE**



**18015 Daimler Fleetline**

**NOTTINGHAM CITY TRANSPORT**

This Park Royal bodied Daimler Fleetline looks elegant in its Nottingham City Transport livery. Shown carrying side adverts for local brewer Home Ales our model is registered 49 NAU, fleet number 49, which operates on route 40 to Wilford Road.

**DECEMBER RELEASE**



**30715 AEC Renown**

**NORTH WESTERN**

North Western were so impressed with AEC Renown's that they placed a large order for them, our model depicts one such vehicle. Registered VDB 973, fleet number 973, decorated with iconic Dulux advertising and working route 55 to Stockport.

**DECEMBER RELEASE**



**27317 Leyland TD1**

**CORK CITY SERVICES**

The splendid livery of Cork City Services is again depicted in the classic TD1 form. Registered PI 6049, fleet number 800 it is shown working on a city service to Dillons Cross.

**DECEMBER RELEASE**



**38116 Bristol VRT 2**

**CROSVILLE N.B.C.**

This former Ribble operated VRT 2 looks just as smart in the green NBC livery of Crosville Motor Services. Registered NCK 981K, fleet number DVG 571K we have depicted it working route R11 to the Welsh market town of Pwllheli.

**JANUARY RELEASE**



**27704 AEC STL Bus (No Roof Box)**

**LONDON TRANSPORT**

This is our first non roof boxed AEC STL in green Country London Transport colours. STL 1605 is registered CXX 315, works route 314 to Hemel Hempstead via Leverstock Green & Bennetts End and carries side advertising for British Railways.

**JANUARY RELEASE**



**38302 Alexander Y Type Bus**

**LINCOLNSHIRE ROAD CAR**

The second release of our Y Type bus looks striking in the Lincolnshire Road Car livery. Fleet number 1463, registered OGM 625M works route 69 to North Scarle and makes an attractive addition to our Lincolnshire fleet.

**JANUARY RELEASE**

**For EFE Stockists or to Buy Direct call: 0208 344 6720**

*Want to keep up to date with all our new model releases?*

Why not join our EFE Subscription Service! See our website for more details.

**www.exclusivefirsteditions.com**